

Esquire

A woman with dark hair, wearing a black strapless dress with a sequined skirt, is sitting on a large martini glass. She is looking towards the camera with a slight smile. The background is dark.

APRIL 1997

THE MAGAZINE FOR MEN

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CULTURE**

By Randall Rothenberg

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Model Husband*

MIKE LUPICA
*Where Have
You Gone,
Jackie Robinson?*

JACK LESSENBERRY
*Dr. Kevorkian
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APRIL 1997 • VOLUME 127 • NO. 4

FEATURES

The Swank Life 70

By RANDALL ROTHENBERG

Take a pre-eyed journey into Lounge Culture, where dames are dames, guys sport sharkskins, and the martinis are shaken, not stirred. Plus: a cocktail primer, a guide to swingin' sounds, and a blueprint for the perfect space-age bachelor pad.

Death and the Matron 80

By JACK LESSNER

He jokes! He laughs! Nothing brings out the lighter side of Dr. Jack Kevorkian like being in the company of seventy-two-year-old James Good, the cuddly, pink-clad suburban-Detroit grandmother who helps him in his deadly labors and defends him to the ... well, you know. They're the Tracy and Hepburn of assisted suicide.



Keeping Up with the Sterns 86

By BILL ZEMKE

At home in his circle, Howard Stern, the King of All Media, attends to his duties: loving his wife of nineteen years, doting on his three daughters, and maybe sneaking in a lap dance or two.



Now Batting for Brooklyn... 94

By MARK LUTICA

Fifty years ago, he crossed baseball's color line, changing the sports world—and America—forever. Here's to you, Jackie Robinson.

Citizen Billy Bob 100

By MARK JACOBSON

How did a forty-one-year-old character actor from Malvern, Arkansas, wind up an Oscar-nominated redneck? The curious (and righteous) case of *King Blade* creator Billy Bob Thornton.

REALITY CHECK

Bill Clinton loses a friend; Joe Klein woos the First Lady; Kurt Cobain rises from the ashes; JFK Jr. gets the runaround. Plus: Larry Flynt reaches Out. By Jeannette Walls 28

(continued on page 140)



COVER: STYLING BY ROBERTO DIAMANTI FOR JANE CASH; HAIR BY MICHAEL MOORE, MAKEUP BY ANTONIA BERNARDI; BOTTLE FOR CARBON, NEW YORK; PROP STYLING BY STEVE BERNARDI FOR BERNARDI AND YVES ROGER; JEFFREY MARGULIES FOR JANE CASH; JANE CASH: JANE CASH; JANE CASH: JANE CASH



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natural gas models. And racks for roasting vegetables and breads. Some models even have lower storage space for grill tools.

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Se instead of wasting your time flipping with tongs and forks, you can concentrate on more important matters. Like choosing your next martini. Or the night wine to accompany expertly grilled lobsters.

Finally, we considered the single most important detail of all. Your complete satisfaction. That's why we offer more than just a 10-year limited warranty.

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the new Weber Platinum Series II Grills, call 1-800-999-WEBER (1-800-999-3237). Or visit our Web site at www.weberbbq.com.



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Dubious Triumph

COULD I PLACE THE DUBIOUS ACHIEVEMENT issue (January) off the stand, exposing a lame anthology of warm-over worn stories, and boy did I get a surprise. New insights into old scars, underneath zany headlines? And a little exclusive chit-chat? Is it Rowlands on the side. What an achievement! Even better than a Leary bust.

—TOM ZWILLNER
Salt Lake City Utah



I HAD NO RESERVES FOR Dick Morris's stripping down to his underwear to do what Sherry Rowlands describes as "his impression of Popeye's signature dance." But from Rowlands's account, Morris wasn't just doing an impression—he was doing the Popeye, the New Orleans dance craze of the early 1930s which started with the great Eddie Bo's recording "Check Mr. Popeye." Several other songs using the "Popeye beat" followed "Check Mr. Popeye."

Compare Morris's dance with Eddie Bo's instructions. Rowlands says Morris had "his hand on his forehead and the other one behind him." Eddie Bo advises, "Now you put your right hand on your forehead and your left be hand your back/Slide a-rite and a-rite with a loose attitude."

Eddie Bo put a bit in "Check Mr. Popeye." "There might be some who are in the know," he says. "You have to tell you just how it goes." Since *Esquire* editors don't seem to be in the know, I suggest they start with the B side, "Now Let's Popeye."

—BRID MITCHELL
Belmore Md

ESQUIRE MAGAZINE DEVOTES ALMOST a page to the trials and tribulations of Joe Klein, who, as Anonymous, wrote *Primary Colors*. But hardly mentions any of the scandals of the month of Bill Clinton or his administration. *Esquire* was hoping to get free access to the inaugural ball, no doubt.

—DALE R. GIFFORD
Pitts Ohio

THE ROWELL-ALLEN PHOTO FROM *The Soundwell* is a double Dubious Achievement. The *Albuquerque Journal*

of August 30, 1995, reported that the *Soundwell* picture was actually a photo of the display at the International UFO Museum, on North Main Street in Roswell, New Mexico. The display is a prop from the movie *Twelve*.

—JOHN M. PILGER
Signal Calif

AFTER READING THE DUBIOUS ACHIEVEMENT of April, I told the people at work about the sexual partners named out by Jessica St. Claire. I was delighted with questions I couldn't answer.

The following are the inquiries that my coworkers and I have. What was the old record? Where did she find the participants—an ad reading, "Woman seeks three hundred men to break world record"? Is the lady from the Boogie and then head move who says, "You've got two minutes?"

—WILLIAM R. ELLIS
Belmont N.Y.

AS AN AUTO SPORTS FAN, I AM ANNOYED at the story of Roberto Alomar's financial collapse. But by publishing a mock ad about the incident in your magazine, you are sending the wrong message and, at the very least, displaying an awful sense of humor. What Alomar did to John Hirschbeck symbolizes all that is wrong with professional baseball and goes apart in general. For goodness' sake, don't promote a bad guy.

—D. COHEN
Queens N.Y.

I AM OUTRAGED AT THE INSENSITIVE, my poor judgment, and blatant anti-Semitism exhibited by *Esquire's* editorial staff in an including something as obscene as "Jewwings" in the January issue. For a magazine that has prided itself on its trendy sophistication, you have now sunk to the depths of filth and immorality. I value our democracy, however, with neither comes responsibility, and you have shamed us all.

—ROBIN C. DENENBERG
New York N.Y.

YOUR JANUARY 1997 ISSUE WAS THE best out—to be cherished.

—EILEEN T. MEXICO
Ann Arise

Being Brannagh

EATERY NOW AND THEN, YOU READ something wonderful that leaves you feeling limp with spent emotion afterward. This has never before happened to me from reading an interview with an actor/producer. I feel I owe this experience in part to Elizabeth Kaye's incisive and well-written article ("Also Poor Kenneth?" January) and in part to Kenneth Brannagh's intelligence, insight and courage. I believe Brannagh will "transfer it back the other way." He may not know it, but he's probably already doing it—the work is part of the process by which he understands and lives his life. His work certainly helps me live and understand mine.

—REBECCA CHANDLER
Sleepy Hollow N.Y.

ON A MERE OF FEEL, THAT WOULD be the brightest heaven of invention" (*Prologue, Henry V*). Although heaven has many faces, a few shine brighter than the rest. May Brannagh's tragic butt, where his for years to come.

—RICHARD HOWELL
Palo Alto, Calif

Show Me the Money

THANK YOU FOR BRINGING THE medical-savings-account program to my (and others') attention (*Money Talks*, by Christopher Flynn, January). I am gratefully retired, am self-employed, and live in Chicago. I am currently not insured. I had not heard of the MSA and am interested in further information. Do you by chance have a phone number for Golden Rule Insurance?

—MIKE DeVITO
Chicago, Ill

EDITOR'S NOTE: Christopher Flynn's January column, which discussed medical savings accounts and, specifically, the program offered by the Golden Rule Insurance Company, prompted a big response from our readers, many of whom requested more information. Golden Rule Insurance can be reached at 888-871-0819.

FINALLY, THE MESSAGE OF MEDICAL SAVINGS ACCOUNTS IS GETTING OUT. As a self-employed person, I've had to en-





dant the high cost of traditional health insurance. MSAs allow self-employed people and small-business owners to enjoy without penalty the health-care benefits that employees take for granted. Thanks for your article. I hope it makes no way to the legislators in Washington to educate them about the benefits of these policies for their constituents.

—PAUL G. REAR
Crescent Hill

WHILE THE RIVALE, HEALTH INSURANCE may indeed save a few bucks in the short run, medical savings accounts undermine the fundamental concepts of insurance and preventive care and will ultimately make health care more expensive in macro terms. Furthermore, the typical lifetime personal savings for which Byron is so hungry is hardly a windfall. It wouldn't even cover hospital costs for an infant born prematurely. *Esquire* does a great job of introducing us to the latest in automobiles, technology, and sporting goods. But sick to fashion Health insurance is one policy you don't want to get mixed up in.

—LEX MICHELE
Boston, Mass.

AFTER READING BYRON'S COLUMN, I would like to share my experience. I have had a medical savings account with Golden Rule Insurance for the past two years, and it has been fabulous. This year I had some unexpected dental expenses totaling more than \$200. I used my MSA funds to cover the dental bill even though they were not covered expenses (I try that with traditional insurance.) I still got back 80% as the end of the year. Golden Rule has been timely, efficient, and very easy to work with. I hope you report further good news concerning MSAs.

—CHUCK BERGMAN
Indianapolis, Ind.

Just Like Mike

IN ANECDOTE BEHIND ME: GROWING Iwary of Michael Jordan ("Small Like Mike," by Mark Jacobson January)? I mean, sure, he's fabulous, and he's one of the few men on the planet I'd actually consent to having sex with. But how many times can you

cheer for a guy who wins the lottery every day of his life?

—BRIAN DARLEY
Ocala, Fla.

Allegro Lives

I READ WITH A GREAT DEAL OF ENJOYMENT the letters to the editor concerning Martha Stemm's excellent article on the unlovable Allegro Coleman ("Dream Girl," November 1998). The piece achieved what the greatest satire accomplishes—you have to think to catch the joke. I also can't think of anything that deserves to be satirized more than our obsession with celebrity. However, it seems to me that Stemm's primary lesson was lost on many of us. Read carefully and pay attention. If we don't, we will all get the Allegro Colemans we deserve.

—MICHAEL GOLDMAN
Atlanta, Ga.

Not So Tired

IN REFERENCE TO THE DEET ARTICLE "Who Could Tired of These?" (January), I found the ladies depicted to be sultry, energetic, and in general doing my. My initial urge was to send a care package of a comb, cookies, and cat treats, my second thought was that I am mainly out of touch, and my final consideration leaves me believing that, indeed, I would prefer glancing at a tire calendar for a month. Or a year.

—TOM MILAM
Ann Arbor, Mich.

The Daily Grind

MY FIERCE FORTH A GRAND "FUCK MYOA, Mark Leyner!" from me and my fellow writers who have to make a daily commute to work, avoiding the subtle pleasures of working from our homes, as explained in your column ("W&L Kingdom," January)? But don't worry, old boy. We will thank you're fabulous and would jump into your shoes faster than our grandmothers left their own rear end. Keep up the great work and the great writing. *Esquire*.

—TAD NELSON
Ann Arbor, Mich.

Letters to the editor should be mailed to The Sound and the Fury, *Esquire*, 110 West 46th Street, New York, N.Y. 10036, or sent by e-mail to esquire@earthlink.net. Include your full name, address, and daytime phone number. Letters may be edited for length and clarity.

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IT MAY BE A FREE COUNTRY, but there's a two-drink minimum. At least that's the way it is in the new Lounge Culture—where leopard-print shirts and are regarded as the more elegant evening wear. Since writer **David Loefer** reports on the Lounge phenomenon ("The Swank Life," page 70), which in the last year has captured the imagination of not only American nightlife but also the music industry and even fashion.

"I first became aware of the Lounge

in a bad way" Loefer's latest book, *Country Tired: Impassions in Rockabilly, Rollergames, Earthquakes, and Angel Food*, will be published in June by Picador. He also wrote the liner notes and selected the music for a twenty-year-old CD set from Time-Life Music called *Intensified Favorites*.

OVER THE YEARS, NONLIST **David Johnson** has accepted some dangerous assignments from Esquire: He reported on the civil war in Liberia, for instance, and on caddy-kidnapping leader Bo Gritz.

This month Johnson is on the ground in war-torn Kabul (Letter from Afghanistan, page 64). "My feeling is that the Afghan people are going to be satisfied for a while with a little peace and order," says Johnson.

the story goes on, the more it seems relevant," says Rosenberry, "perhaps because we're all getting older and we know that sooner or later we are all Dr. Jack's potential patients."

"Howard Stern and I see eye to eye," says Rosenberry, "but largely because we're both on fast live. I've never written about someone so tall." In "Sleeping Up with the Sound" (page 86) Zohar examines one of the great women of Stern's career: his nineteen-year marriage to Alison Stern. "He may be the King of All Media when he's on the air," says Zohar, "but back in their Long Island castle, Howard happily adorns himself to the duagion"—where he can at least have cybersex in privacy.

To celebrate the fifteenth anniversary of Jackie Robinson's major league debut, Sporting Life columnist **Mike Lupica** went to Brooklyn to witness how Robinson's legend and legacy live on ("Now Barring for Brooklyn," page 94). Though Lupica grew up a Yankees fan, he says, "I've contrasted on those old Flat bush street corners and not be moved by this man. You've got to remember, there are two twentieth-century stories of Auren can sports one before 1949 and one after." Lupica's latest book is *Mad as Hell: How Sports Got Away from the Fans—and How We Got It Back* (Putnam).

Actors who star in films such as *Chopper* (Chick in New Haven) are lucky just to park cars on *Audubon Avenue* right now. Billy Bob Thornton—who wrote, directed, and stars in the Oscar-nominated *Sling Blade*—has made Hollywood take notice. Contributing editor **Mark Jacobson** caught up with the man some call the hillbilly Orson Welles ("Classics: Billy Bob," page 100). "He's a great American," says Jacobson, whose second novel, *Everyone and No One*, will be published this summer by Villard. "Meeting with Billy Bob, I was able to reconnect with the tragic legacy of Elvis." ■



revival at a dinner party in L.A.," says Rosenberry. "Since then, I've seen it regress to clubs from San Francisco to Orlando and even into mail-order—whereas was playing Morris Deane tunes during the Christmas season, and Pottery Barn has a CD called *Morris Lounge*." But for Rosenberry, the resurgence of the style has a personal significance. "For years, I've loved nothing more than a night on the rocks and Vic Damone on the radio. At last the world is catching up to me."

To help get in the proper groove, author **Joseph Lanza** (*The Cocktail and Eleanor Marx*, both from St. Martin's) offers a bartending primer (page 74) and a Lounge music discography (page 76). "The martini," says Lanza, "is a good cautionary drink because you're always reminded you're drinking alcohol, whereas overindulgent drinks, like the cosmopolitan, can sneak up on you

whose books include *Angels, Aliens, and Jane Doe*, but I just don't see a loss." Johnson's latest novel, *Monkey Dood*, will be published this summer by HarperCollins.

Chances are, you would not want to invite Dr. Jack Kevorkian to your next birthday party, but the man is a lot more fun than you'd expect. And much of that is due to his seventy-two-year-old associate, Janet Good ("Death and the Maroon," page 86). **Jack Loefer**, who teaches journalism at Wayne State University in Detroit and won an Emmy for a *Frontline* documentary on Kevorkian that he helped report and produce, made shoguns (as to speak) with Dr. Death and Good. "The longer



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Reality Check

By Jeannette Walls



Leave lips: Brought again by a secret staffer?

SKELTONS

Former Friends of Bill

DID ONE OF Bill Clinton's oldest friends inadvertently cause another bone's exposure?

Things got a little hot around the White House recently because of comments attributed to former Clinton aide David Watkins in a magazine story Watkins, says a source, is furious about the article and is now considering legal action.

A central figure in Travelgate who resigned from the White House after being caught using a government helicopter to go on a golf outing, Watkins is also the man behind the infamous memo that revealed there would be "hell to pay" if

anyone didn't follow **White House** wishes and get rid of some office employees.

Last summer, Watkins began discussions with **Rebecca Borders**, a writer for the right-wing magazine *The American Spectator* about doing a book on his White House encounters, according to Borders. The two spent several months working on the project, says the writer. They shopped the proposed book around, she adds, but didn't sell it. "We never established rules concerning the possession of the [notes, drafts, and tape-recorded interviews] should no book be published," Borders maintains. "Nor did we ever sign a collaborative agreement. I was never paid for my work on the now dead project."

So Borders took all her notes and tapes and turned them into a ten thousand-word article for *The American Spectator* and Watkins is not exactly happy about it.

Borders's story alleges that the president had an affair with his head of correspondence, **Martha Stewart**, who has also been involved in the White House database scandal. Scott didn't return calls for comment, but the article quotes Watkins as saying that the two spent the night together the day **Rachel Foster** was found dead. Also, according to the article, Vince Foster and the First Lady were romantically involved.

The magazine press

PRIMER Make Headlines, Not War

AT THE NEW YORK TIMES the slogan "All the News That's Fit to Print" apparently doesn't apply when Pulitzer prizes are at stake.

The Times is vying for a Pulitzer for its coverage of Gulf-war syndrome, including the September 30 front-page article by **Philip Sheras** about a suspected mustard-gas attack on a naval-reserve battalion. The military has denied that a chemical attack took place, even though the soldiers had symptoms "very clearly similar" to those suffered by troops the Pentagon admits could have been exposed to chemicals.

But some scientists and media experts feel that the paper of record has been downplaying or ignoring compelling studies that suggest that Gulf-war syndrome doesn't exist or is just a modern-day version of shell shock. Among those damaged by the Times's coverage, sources

say was the paper's own science editor, **Nicholas Wade**.

Wade wanted to give prominent play to the studies debunking Gulf-war syndrome, a stance clear, but was overruled by top editors. "He argued very passionately that the Times wasn't being honest and wasn't being fair," according to a source. "He was very upset." After a vocal dispute about the paper's coverage, says the insider, Wade resigned his post as science editor (though he will stay on as a reporter).

Wade denies that the two incidents are linked. "It's an ingenious hypothesis," he says, "but it's incorrect. The two things are unconnected."

Getting the mustard gas: did happen.

Then spokes man wouldn't comment on Pulitzer submissions but said, "The coverage of the Gulf-war issue has been extremely thorough, unprejudiced, and fair, and we're extremely proud of it."

Borders insists that Watkins isn't upset about the article and says he's refusing to elaborate on his alleged comments "for the same reason that he didn't go public with his story earlier. He doesn't want to put himself out there."



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Reality Check

MIRACLES

Smells Like Holy Spirit

Kurt Cobain was always a grunge god, but it seems he's going after an even higher calling. When Cobain headed off to nirvana in 1994, his

body was cremated and his widow, **Gaia** Love, carried his ashes around in a leopardskin. One of the places Love took the remains was to Seattle

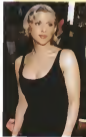
psychic Thaddeus Guza, who spread the singer's ashes around and performed a psychic reading.

When Love left Guza's ceremony, she neglected to dump up all of her late husband. I didn't want to just brush it up and throw it away, because it is, after all, well, you know," Guza says. "I kept calling [Love] for two years to come get the ashes, but I never heard from her." So finally, he decided it was time to clean up the place. "The fact that

they were lying around here for two years is more a testimony to my house-keeping skills than to the sanctity of human remains," Guza admits.

But something mysterious happened: Guza refuses to comment, but a Kurt Cobain follower insists that by the time Guza began to clean the ashes off a window sill, they had formed an image of Jesus. A source says that the art has been visited by Cobain groupies and that Guza had the ashes photographed. "I'm sorry, I just can't comment on anything having to do with the reading or the image," he says. "It would seem like I was trying to take advantage of a situation."

Could be the new shroud of Turin.



Love: keeper of the ashes.

Kennedy: Working the floor.

COUNTERTOPS

Stromming His Pain

Goodie horror **John F. Kennedy Jr.** charcoared south **Lois Furber**. He gorged with the editor of the *National Enquirer* and his brother bread with **Bill Graham**. But don't expect him to rub his new political robes. Senator **Strom Thurmond**. A source says that Kennedy "is practically on his hands and knees" trying to get an interview with the renegade senator from South Carolina, calling his office relentlessly. "He's saying Jesus Hefen has agreed to do a joint interview," says the source. "Strom doesn't give interviews and especially wouldn't to George Bush [Thurmond's office is] having fun with it."



COINCIDENCES

Gay People vs. Larry Flynt

WHAT DOES AMERICA'S LARGEST gay and lesbian magazine have in common with one of America's sleaziest porn magazines? A cover.

The poster that was going to be used in ads for *The People* in Larry Flynt appeared on the covers of both *Out* magazine and Flynt's beloved *Hustler* at the same time. The poster, depicting **Woody Harrison** in an American flag leotard, crooked on a woman's crotch, had been banned last year by the Motion Picture Association of America.

"We didn't know *Hustler* was going to use it until we saw it on the newsstands," says a spokeswoman for *Out*. "We got it from Harrison's press agent. He really liked the image and thought

it wasn't appropriate that it was censored. Unbeknownst to anyone, Mr. Flynt, in his usual maverick style, just ran the picture—without any inside story and without anyone's knowledge. He must have gotten it from working on and with the film."

Flynt's office was less forthcoming. "You don't have my authorization or Mr. Flynt's authorization to write about this," said a *Hustler* spokeswoman who refused to give her name. "I forbid you to write about this without our authorization." When asked if that attitude wasn't contrary to Flynt's First Amendment crusade, the unnamed spokeswoman hung up.



Direct media: The poster of the First Amendment.

"Three things you should know, Love. The name's Mel. The drink's Tanqueray Sterling Vodka. And how unreasonable I can be if you forget the first two."



Reality Check

SECOND HELPINGS

Renaissance Man



Klein Making nice with the Clintons.

WEETEND A RENAISSANCE MAN, Clinton's philandering president and his disapproving wife haven't cooled Joe Klein's desire to carry up to the First Family during the New Year weekend: the Primary Clinton anchor was a guest at the invitation-only Renaissance Weekend at Hilton Head, South Carolina.

an event that also included Lady Bird Johnson, Ron Silver, Dr. Ruth Westheimer, and Barbra Streisand—who raised eyebrows by refusing to wear a name tag, though even the president did. The weekend, which is off the record for journalists, has been criticized by some for its potential for cronyism. A source, worried that the formerly *Anonymous* maven Klein "was chatting up a storm with

Mike Clinton," was even more taken aback to hear the journalists tell the First Lady, "If you ever go traveling to some place like India, I'd like to travel with you again." (While at Newport, Klein accompanied Mrs. Clinton on her trip to Asia.) Hillary Clinton says the source was "extremely friendly" but nonsensical.

ECONOMICS

Cheap Like a Fox

FOX EXECUTIVES ON Fox's new *Barbershop* might start looking like the other way when the check arrives. Fox/TV president and chief operating officer **David Hill** has sent a "penny-punching" memo to staffers, urging them to cut expenses by 10 percent so Fox doesn't "become part of the continuing decay in network/advertiser viewing." Laying fellow doesn't pick up the tab in

restaurants is one of the handy tips mentioned, so a cutting down overtime. ("Is that extra hour necessary?")

"Those of you who have trouble with the above or fail to grasp its implications," Hill wrote, "are more than welcome to have a few minutes with me in my office, behind closed doors, where I will spell it all out in words of no more than one syllable."

Joe Klein felt that he was tight with the Clintons at one point early in the presidency, but they felt betrayed by him," says another source. "A lot of people felt that Primary Clinton was sort of a savings tea lecture that he's trying to get in right with them again. But the Clintons react worst from

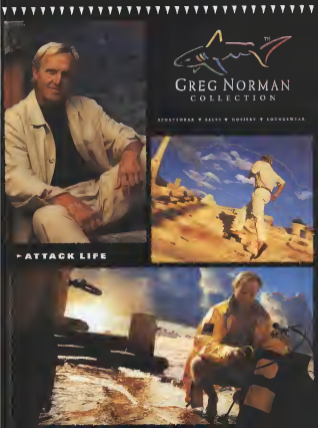
back on their side, or he wouldn't have been moved."

Perhaps not all is forgiven between Klein and the president, however. During Renaissance Weekend, Mr. Clinton stopped a panel called "How the Presidential Race Was Covered." Among the panel speakers: Joe Klein.



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OPTICS

Tom and Jerry

TOM CRUISE LOOKS LIKE A MILLION DOLLARS IN new glasses—but evidently not like a million. His latest flick, *Jerry Maguire*, was one of the most heavily promoted movies in recent history—with product placements for Coke, Gap Inc., and Budweiser—but industry insiders are amazed that Maguire didn't land a placement for a Cruise signature sunglasses. One source says the price tag for the official Maguire specs was \$1 million and that was a shade too high. The producers never signed a deal, so the sunglasses Cruise wore, Arnette, got a free plug in the hit flick. ■

Eyes and other face 'n' shades throughout the ages—from left, *Andy Rosen*, *Top Gun* (top row); *Days of Thunder*, *Ran Man* at himself (bottom row).





CHAPS
RALPH LAUREN



Kristen Johnston

WITH MINOR exceptions, Kristen Johnston left the last stages of New York for the second stages of Hollywood, she did so with the modest hope of snagging the part of "a sexy sidekick with four lines per episode" on some standard sitcom. But she overbroke her goal by a quarter-billion years, landing a lead on NBC's contemporary sitcom of Ford from the Sun and a Golden Globe nomination. As Billy Solitson, the male alien trapped inside the body of a knockout female human, Johnston has become TV's funniest, most endearing, and unlikely sex symbol. Everybody loves her "ed Rock appeals to the whole crossover group," she admits. "Really smart people and twelve-year-old boys. I'm usually the one, they hang out over the heads of the young kids." Still, a young perception of the role, they believe, is a place nobody always at odds with her body and in a perpetual state of puberty. Another actress might have played the beach babe as a minuscule or a dylan or a Buffalo. But Johnston just went mental. "The great thing about Billy," she says, lighting a cigarette, "is that she's very drug queen, very dylani, very funny, very sexy, very not boring, very unimpressive. She's all of it."

Although the now twenty-nine-year-old is now at home in Los Angeles, she hasn't yet turned into an L.A. android. She's as vigorous, for example. "No one," says Johnston. "There's nothing cooler to me than someone saying, 'You want to get a milk and a banana?'" —STEPHEN SODER

Control: Johnston, the sequel to *Crucial*, after a month's downtime, will be playing Thomas F. W.

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COOK LIKE A MAN JIM QUINN

Meet Mr. Tea

NEVER ORDER TEA IN American restaurants. All you can get is a cup of water, poured from a pot kept warm (unbottled) atop the coffee machine and continuously carried across the room to cool. Sometimes a supermarket let-brand tea bag is tucked into the sugar, and sometimes there's a box of tea bags with many elegant names on their foil wrappers. It doesn't matter, dunked in chilly water, they all taste the same.

You may never have tasted real tea. Try making some yourself. Following these simple rules. Avoid supermarkets—the tea they sell is dead. Avoid tea bags—they're filled with chopped leaves or, best, tea dust and twigs at worst.

Buy real tea through a tea dealer, in person or by mail. My favorite is Nai Loh of House of Tea Ltd. (any guy-type) in Philadelphia, former student of Frank

Lloyd Wright's, Ringling Bros. clown, and chef at Montage Frisco, the leading tea salon of Paris. Nai is eager to explain the arcane language of fine tea.

Chinese tea are named. Naians usually indicate only the tea's provenance and the way the tea was served. Green tea is unfermented, oolong is semi-fermented, and

fermented is oop. Chinese black tea, compressed into a cake for traveling ease—as it has been for a thousand years—is unfettered with the State of Beverly Plaza of Times Square.

Black tea is fully fermented. Indians may have estate names and many different subtypes of quality. Orange pekoe and pekoe are tea types but leaf sizes. Orange pekoe is the smallest and most expensive. But Indian tea can be picked extra small (called flowery orange pekoe), or extra extra small (fippy flowery orange pekoe), or so small the leaves are almost golden (fippy golden flowery orange pekoe). And, of course, there are fine-grade and number-one classifications. Tea types of tea may be listed this way: Mithibing (the estate), Darjeeling (from the high mountains of north India), FTGPOP-1, first or second flush. First flush is the first picking of the season (as is delicate), second flush is a later leaf (sooey intense). House of Tea's Mithibing FTGPOP-1, second flush, a famous Darjeeling, is nine dollars per quarter pound. Which is less, oolong for oolong, than the junk in a three-dollar box of supermarket tea bags.

Some tea cost even more, but remember that a pound of tea makes two

hundred cups. Formosa jade oolong (forty dollars a quarter pound) is eighty cups a cup—cheaper than pig waste. And jade oolong, pale and greeny, has a flavor like that of no other tea, delicate and piercing, like perfumed fog. Pearl River high jasmine, called a tribute tea because no more than eighty pounds are produced in any one year, is flower sweet, delicate, and sixty-three dollars a quarter pound—is it a cup for tea more than fifty-year-old Chateau Latour?

Here's how Nai Loh makes tea. Use the lit, dainty traditional English Chardford teapot, the best you can buy. Soak the pot by filling it with boiling water. Dump the water out. Add one level teaspoon of tea per cup. "Forget a spoonful for the pot, the pot's not drinking any tea," says Nai. Pour water at a rolling boil. "Not a hard boil—you lose oxygen—the tea loses flavor." Let tea sit three to five minutes, depending on your taste, and get the tea off the leaves. "Some teas become overbrowed and bitter," Nai warns. If you like milk, put it in the cup first. For a nice, creamy tan color. If you add milk last—try this at home—the tea turns an ugly gray.

QUASI-TRUE CRIT

DISCOVERIES AND TALK STANDS AS THEY USED TO BE—JUST NOT THE ONE. Two books on John Wayne are about to take the nation of biographical detail to new and elegant heights of fancy. Just out is Gary Miller's *John Wayne's America* (Simon & Schuster). Dubbed "the biography of a nation," the book paints that Wayne a contribution as a conceptual and political influence far beyond the actor's heavy-handed art. More intriguing is this summer's *John Wayne: A Novel*, by Gus Russo (Doubleday), a piece of metafiction that charts Wayne's life from the perspective of his real-life friendship with the Russo family. A mind-blowing fact: the most significant movie loss of the century (1941) was high-ranking biographical—the same year? Death stays in play, progress.



TOP: TIMOTHY O'NEILL



COOL WATER

100% COTTON

ORDER OF THE DUCK. After I got paid for getting up at five in the morning to go to school, why did I

BY SAM PRATT



BIG CEREKAKE: For those who care for authors before paper appears, we try "previews of services," the question of lastingly very reading matter or merely ephemeral. The low road, the more serious Melville/Deleuze/Spinoza eating (later), the full 1994 issue of which was partly sent by master promoter Robert Harris. (Call him 800-367-7467 for the latest.) The high road was an "art" publisher Benedict Sanchez of Berkeley books. He sent recent his collection of images by famous photographer Jürgen Kuhn, who photographs people also displaying images—another a still dealing in a garage sale—with one old photo of famous models like Brito Moss and Erico McManis of who understand but at their party and strictly want.



BIG BOOKS: Memo to young American writers of across fiction. Call your publishers right now and beg them not to release your book that year. By 1994, because all the available knowledge will be brought by four of the genre's all-time greatest writers: Thomas Pynchon, Philip Roth, J.D. Salinger, and Don DeLillo. Due in April, Pynchon's *Mason & Dixon* has been the subject of 16 press since 1971 (when *New York* broke the story that the obscure author was contemplating a novel concerning that infamous Maryland-Pennsylvania divide). Meanwhile, the more prolific and confident Roth—whose private life has become (un)public of late thanks to co-wife Claire Bloom—brings

BIG STUFF: "Then" is not just the name of van Gogh's famously painted brother, it's also the first four letters of two top-notch Web sites, both updated weekly. Operating from a command post in Wisconsin and unrelentingly barking itself "Number One in News," www.TheDream.com has outdistanced its humor competition with deadpan, absurdist headlines like *PEACE "CANADA" HAS OWN GOVERNMENT, LAWS SECRET OF FIRE SALES INTO HUMAN HATED, AND DINKY CITIZEN TO RECEIVE BOOTHING REASON*. For hard technology news, try www.TheDream.com, a one-train operation run by Michael Sappay.



BIG 'TIME: Everyone knew that eventually some clown "also guys would get organized and ambitious enough to take their beatniks into a legit, unapologetic publication. And wouldn't know, the first legit there was the business of business, Green, which offers "Personal Issues for the Insomniac," began in 1995 on a ragtag journal for young people who "were just about, anyway." A couple of years later, it had a glossy cover, a half-million issues, a 100-member list, color, real ads, and even amazing business-reply cards. Typical articles: "What the hell is a band?" "Covering your assets," and an interview with the Microphone (inventor from Popul, Subscriptions). See www.Green245.com, Green 295, New York, New York 10015 1000, or call 800-477-2905.



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OUR KIND OF GUY

Vince Vaughn

SOME GUYS REALLY DO have all the luck. Despite appearances, twenty-seven-year-old Vince Vaughn isn't one of them. Oh, sure, he won *aves* for a kooky comic performance in last year's universally gushed-over hyper-romantic comedy, *Swingers*. And he's about to land on just about every movie screen on earth in this summer's installment of Steven Spielberg's *Genie*, aka *The Lost World: the sequel to Jurassic Park*. But all it can do is Vaughn's state of being *swinger*. "You don't even know," his former buddy "It's women. It's like they all want to prove they can burn me and lead me on." He plays a significant portion of the females he encounters these days can't seem to separate him from the smooth-talker, cocky-boogie, "beautiful lady" bustle. "I chose to be played in *Swingers*. I chose myself in the face with that character. I feel like I've got to get a whole different game now. It's like they're all arm tape of my jump shot and know I'm going left." (Note: When pushed on the effect success has really had on his love life, Vaughn sheepishly admits, "Oh, at the end of the day, I guess it helps.") He claims he's far from a nightclub Casanova and even less akin to the rogue photographer trying not to become *hires* if occurs than he portrays in *The Lost World*—a film that will exponentially increase the odds of those familiar with him, ah, genre. But, he notes, "in it is now, I'm still getting cut off on line at the grocery. I mean, it's not like I'm Harrison Ford or something." Good thing, too—can you imagine the troubles he'd have then? —Zev Borow



Never say never.

Dewar's

Drive a Greenmobile

IT GOES EIGHTY-eight miles per hour at top speed and eighty miles per charge. We're talking about the new General Motors EV1, now available for lease in Arizona and southern California.

It's a true electric getting renovations, although the most important form of electricity GM is using to power the EV1 is the Hollywood kind. Introduced late last year, the two-seater EV1 showed up at the premiere of the Sylvester Stallone thriller Daylight. Michael Eisner has signed up for one, and Tim Allen's wife, Jennifer, had recently predestined her "The Oracle." The ads for the car are pure Hollywood, too. Produced by Industrial Light & Magic, they are part E.T. part The Lady From Japan part Jersey.

It's significant that GM has assigned the EV1—the first car ever approved by Undersecretary Liberman—to its Western division, known for selling cars straightforwardly as if they were appliances. But for now, the EV1 is less an appliance than a key—a green, PC version of Buzz Lightyear.

FLAMINGOS FLY AGAIN



THE HIGHLIGHTS OF STAR POWER HAVE BEEN tied to a campaign with face belt buckles that no number deed was closer for the silver-screening revivals of *Flamenco*. John Waters' classic filmmaker. The take-off is now, perhaps to name the most intriguing, you can drive it still outrageous and elaborate and amateur (like superstar Bruce [on left] is what is still one of the most poorly dressed

screen movies. The new version, not this month, will include thirteen musical previously unseen footage, which Waters says was cut for length, and shock value. The extra scenes will show "a full film reference by the *Black Man* against *Black*." Waters says and "the coverage on *Cookie* the *Flamenco*." Which includes *Divine* mounting on a reversed one. How does Waters feel about *Flamenco* a quarter century after the fact? "It's my eternal juvenile delinquent," he says. "Whether it is *Black* or *Black* I've put to figure out."

Plugging in: The EV1, GM's electric car.



Plugging in: the EV1

aimed at early adopters. GM has spent \$50 million on a project that it admits will never turn a profit.

Creating the EV1 turned out to be a bracing technical exercise, and GM hopes its eye-off will eventually improve all its cars—and improve GM's reputation for innovation. GM hopes to lease about twenty-five hundred of the cars as a test. Any wider distribution means unlikely. GM engineers were forced to rethink all kinds of basic

systems to create the car. It's equipped with regenerative braking, a system that uses an electrical generator to capture the momentum lost in stopping and feed it back into the batteries. There's enough juice to run a radio, AC, and power windows. Using aluminum, magnesium, and composites GM produced a radically light and sleek vehicle, whose drag coefficient is the lowest of any production car in the world. The presence of rear wheel drive and a Corolla-like rear end is not about design—it's a concession to airflow.

Most user reports on the EV1 marvel at its silence. It is silent as silk, to be sure, and almost silent as crowd, necessitating an irritating warning signal like those on support electric cars. But the car is not at all silent in acceleration. It goes, by the way, from zero to sixty in about

nine seconds. On takeoff, the sounds it makes are unmistakably electric, a whole anthology of appliance noises GM engineers say they hear a jet plane. We hear our Nordli on taking on a real-world patch of gravel rubble. You quickly get used to these strange noises and to the surprising amount of torque—I managed to spin the wheels right away. The car's ride is a bit hard, but the suspension is surprisingly agile.

Thanks to tax credits, the EV1 is available for lease at around \$200 a month—about the cost of leasing a mopey fossil-fuel-burning BMW jet.

The charger can also be leased, for another fifty dollars a month, and hooked up to your garage by your local utility. A full charge takes three hours. But you can never go far from this plug, which is a fit symbol for the limited range the EV1 faces. As I drove the EV1, it occurred to me that the last thing most of us want to add to our lives is another appliance we have to plug in. All the star power in the world will have a hard time changing that.

IN THE RAW



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What is on your mind? David Foster Wallace's brilliant book *Moody* and his post-postmodernism.



BOOKS WILL BURN

To Be Young, Gifted, and Unhip

DEATH TO BERNINI! A poet on stage! I hope never to read another "big" novel, I declare, making questions mark in the air with my fingers in that obvious gesture that says, "I'm living issue here!" In fact, I never want to spend another hour among the hip. Let's drag them all—authors, musicians, models, stars, filmmakers—from their psychic Downtown and bring them up from the Things Nodding during rush hour in plain sight of all those heading back to Queens that bemoaned borough.

Yes, despite my own boundless capacity for it,

every spoils me the boredom, the deadpan, the vociferous modernism, the terror of necessity. It seems perhaps the worst of the postmodernism, a lean-shocking noise mode, a premature concession speech before the universal's injustices (and survival). Whatever it is expressed in a whimsical or a four-handled page novel, every increasingly fantastic as a resort to power. It's a reaction, not a primary process. And it's getting kind of boring because it's culturally ubiquitous. David Lerner made us money a national rage during the caprice and actually changed the way the young (or the

singing) hip talked. However, as David Foster Wallace has observed, whereas story was once a useful literary tactic, making the discrepancy between the usage of American life and the reality (think of *Father Knows Best* versus *The Simpsons*), it has now become something of a literary cliché. It's too reflexive, too suspicious of story, it delineates language from character, and it's embarrassed by heart.

So what a sweet deliverance it is to read Rick Moody's third novel, the generally magnificent *Purple America* (Little, Brown). Somehow the author manages to display all the standard trappings of postmodernism (parody, but making, the evaluation of language, a Greek's love

of technology, a multiplicity of voices and forms), but the wordplay is tipped—made of misdeeds—with compassion for his characters. He is that rare writer who can make the language do tricks and still diffuse his narrative with soul. (The journeying depths of the soul



of wintering, and if *Purple America* is any indication, he's found his true voice.



CLASSIC MONK

CARICATURE, COMEDY, AND THINGS AS THEY ARE ABOUT part of classical modernism, but then Marshall McLuhan is no modernist, and a pioneer in what is called "cultural social techniques." In the fourth decade of his career, David Byrne's *Classic Monk* says again displays his command over the world's leading edge in the art of the book. The title work is a series of stories and tales that depict the processes of cultural transformation. Titles such as "Lost Mind" and "Old Love" indicate that this might be the first time that music and comedy have gone hand in hand. In "The Power of the Book," *Monk* and three other singers illustrate the possible interactions of people, animals, and things.

—BARBARA JONES

are exactly what the Bronx can't usually get at.)

At the outset of *Purple America*, everything is melting down—Connecticut's Millstone Nuclear Power Plant and the nuclear family itself, especially the beautiful Mrs. Billie Bluffie suffers from a neurological disease she is trapped nearly immovable to inside her body with a sharp and tender mind. "She had been a talent," Moody writes, "but her voice was gone, was consigned now to the netherworld of widowed souls and earrings." Her second husband, Lou, the retiring manager of the malfunctioning atomic station, has just abandoned her after years of marriage. So she returns home from New York but only offering the future lessons in life, a marriage, hard-driving, disavowing, Reagan loving, underemployed freelance press agent. More requests that can do his final duty by killing her. That's where the fun begins.

The runner is that Rick Moody once wanted to be a producer. He claimed he missed the call of the pulpit, the American novel is in need of wintering, and if *Purple America* is any indication, he's found his true voice.

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Like people, so too diamonds are older. Formed in the earth's depths of years ago, diamonds are found in the most remote corners of the world. De Beers, the world's largest diamond company, has over 100 years' experience in mining and

marketing. They sort rough diamonds into over 5,000 grades before they go on to be cut and polished. So be sure you know what you're buying. Two diamonds of the same size may vary widely in quality. And if a price looks too good to be true, it probably is. *Unlike apples in a store's best fruit*. You want a diamond you can be proud of. So don't be attracted to a jeweler just because of "bargain prices." Find someone you can trust. Ask questions. Ask friends who've gone through it. Ask the jeweler you choose why two diamonds that look the same are priced differently. You want someone who will help you determine quality and value using four characteristics called *The 4 C's*. They are: *Cut*, not the same as shape, but refers to the way the facets, or flat surfaces, are angled. A better cut offers more brilliance. *Color* actually, close to no color is rarest; *Clarity*, the fewer natural marks, or "inclusions," the better; *Carat weight*, the larger the diamond, usually the more rare. Remember, the more you know, the more confident you can be in buying a diamond you'll always be proud of. *Learn more*. For the booklet "How to buy diamonds you'll be proud to give," call 1-800-FOREVER, Dept. 24.

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CONDOLA!

It's near death in Venice when two couples set out on a three-hour tour, a three-hour tour...

NOW IT CAN BE TOLD. The U.S. government, citing national security concerns, had obtained an injunction prohibiting publication of the following diary entries, which chronicle a near-tragic vacation in Venice last summer.

Last week, my attorney, constitutional-law scholar and feared litigator Uri Knoblauch—the man who recently successfully defended the First Amendment rights of people who have already seen a movie so in behind you in a theater and movie dialogue before the characters onscreen do—was able to get that injunction lifted. And so now I'm able to make the following harrowing account available to the American public.

A little background. Last summer, I was talking to my wife, Mercedes, about taking a second honeymoon, just the two of us hacking back in stone erotic and unmanly mode for a couple of weeks, with our daughter, Gaby, reminded to the custody of Grandma. While we were in the midst of planning, our little getaway, Robert, my aggressively misanthropic and rich second-cousin brother, calls up. Robert wants us to accompany him and his neurotic but peculiarly seductive wife, Larbara, to Venice—surface, a week at the Gritti Palace, all on him, won't cost us a dime. Meret is ecstatic—oh Venice, how romantic! I'm like, no

fucking way I'm not going to be cooped up on airplanes and in hotels and restaurants for a week with Robert. And in the middle of the summer, Venice is swarming with tourists, and the canals stink.

"Don't be an idiot!" Meret says. "It's free! The Gritti Palace, great! And we won't have to be with them every single minute."

I make the unforgivable mistake of nodding to Meret on a venture I know is ill-fated from the get-go. What follows are those diary entries pertaining to the Gondola Ride.

I didn't even want to go on the Gondola Ride in the first place. I just wanted to chill out at Harry's Bar, drink Bellini, and think about how rare it was not to be stuck on a gondola with Robert and Larbara. But

THURSDAY, JUNE 11

2:45 PM: The gondoler, in traditional wide-brimmed straw hat with red

ribbon, is singing his barcarole (Venetian boat song) as he propels us past the marble facades of the palazzo along the Grand Canal. We pass the Palazzo San Marco and the Doge's Palace.

3:45 PM: The gondoler is in full throat, belting out when suddenly, he clatters his chest, grunting horribly, and lurches backward into the canal, taking his cue with him. I assume a massive coronary.

3:52 AM: We attempt to guide the gondole back to the landing stage with our hands, but to no avail. It seems as if we are being inexorably drawn east, out the Grand Canal and into the Canal di San Marco.

3:55 AM: Meret, Robert, and Larbara are screaming in hopes that a police launch or a vaporetto, or a motorcade will pick us up. I'm too angry to scream for help. I sit with my arms folded over my chest and sulk.

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 10

5:30 AM: We drift into the Adriatic Sea.

6:05 AM: I find an old, water-logged copy of the newspaper *Il Tempo della Sera* near the prow of the gondola and read for a while, despite not understanding a word of Italian. A beautiful-sounding line that I'm certain is something out of Dante's *Divine Comedy* turns out to mean "Stunning revelation about brain."

7:05 PM: We have now finished the containers of leftovers from yesterday's lunch at the Piere (sicca, from alla mamma and a barrel of Prosecco, a naturally fermented sparkling white wine).

I'm still hungry and suggest that we kill Robert and eat him. But I'm outvoted.

11:00 AM: I make the completely incoherent comment that I'll probably be the only one whose chest will

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appear in *The New York Times*.

Temper begins to flare inexplicably

THESE ARE IT

BELLA: We are now launched and on the verge of complete dehydration I suggest that in lieu of considering one another we drink one another's blood I assume that we can probably survive for a couple of days on the meanness and water thirst. We agree to prick our fingers, insert into the waste bottle, and step from there.

We put the bottle around and sing (for some reason, Edie Winter sang) When it's his turn to drink, Lubert balks, saying he'll drink only type B.

"What are you, some kind of connoisseur?" I ask.

"No, it's just that I'm type B, so it's dangerous for me to have anything other than type B. I suppose I could have D."

"Lubert, just because you're type B doesn't mean you can drink only type B. Type compatibility is relevant only if you're getting a transfusion directly into your bloodstream."

"How does the immune system recognize different blood types, anyway?" Lubert asks.

"Different sugar chains on the surface of red blood cells distinguish the four main blood types," I tell her. "On O cells, for instance, the chain ends in fucose. On A and B cells, N-acetylglucosamine and galactose, respectively, branch off the pentasaccharide sugar." I then draw a quick molecular diagram on the Carver desk.

"Look, y'know, your brother really does know an awful lot," says Lubert. "My brother's a dilettante."

"I'm a polymath, anshole," I say.

BELLA: To kill time and annoy my brother, I engage everyone with more of my erudition.

"The density of methane is 0.7 kilograms per cubic meter. The taller building in Albany is the Freeman Corning II Tower. Chaka Khan's real name is Yvette Stevens."

I keep that obnoxious litany of trivia going for two straight hours.

You'd think that in such dire circumstances, tolerating a sibling

wouldn't be as satisfying, but it is. In fact, I'm surprised at how easily good it feels.

BELLA: Dealing with the short boredom has become one of our major challenges. We realize Ben O'Neil's Of late books, albums, films...

"Best film, I'd nominate Kenneth Anger's *Lucifer Rising*," I say.

"Schindler's List," says

Lubert. "Spielberg makes his big Holocaust movie, and it's a hagiography of some goddamned German? Dude should stick to the three-foot wax-cast figures who like holding hands."

"Can we talk about something else? This is getting too heavy," Lubert says.

"Too heavy? We're all going to die on this floating suppository, and I can't criticize Steven Spielberg?"

"You know, it's really not necessary to use that kind of language with my wife," says Lubert indignantly.

"Hey, fuck you, Mr. The Only Way I Can Get Anyone to Spend Time with Me. Given My Completely Colorless Personality, it is by Flattering My Big Salary and Buying People Trips to Beautiful European Cities I hold you personally responsible for the fact that I might die in the middle of the Adriatic Sea in this goddamned gondola. This is not how I wanted to die."

"How did you want to die?" asks Lubert.

"I don't know... of an Ectasy overdose in the Mordavian with Renee Whitehouse or something. Not like the Thai it is equal."

BELLA: Increasingly desperate to maintain lucidity, we play the Who's It? Rafter Hair Sex With Grace.

Bad Pat or Tim Cruise? Sharon Stone or Ursula Thorne? Juliette Binoche or Christine Anagnost? Paula Patton or Sarah McDougall? Wer? Marilyn or Dwayne Chopin? Claudia Benu or Fe Mingosi? Erik Williams or Christian Benci?

THESE ARE IT

BELLA: In the distance, we make out a boat, there's general euphoria.

As the boat gets closer, I see that it's a yacht—and not just anyone's yacht. It's Uday Hussein's. Uday Hussein—Saddam's daggish son, of course—is perhaps best known for an episode in which one of his father's servants appeared at the door to his palace during a particularly raucous party to respectfully ask that Uday turn the music down. Uday responded by bludgeoning the hapless minion to death with an ashtray.

Hussein recognized the astronaut skupper, I explain to my giddy companions that we've got a good-sensu-bad-news situation.

BELLA: We are safely aboard Uday's yacht. So far, we are being treated with kindness and respect. Among Uday's friends partying on his boat, the only person I'm able to recognize is former *Dynasty* star Rod Brakes.

BELLA: I overhear Uday and someone else up on deck talking about a year-and-a-half tour. I ask a friend of mine, Andrew Boudreau. Uday says he's taking an "onion. Whether by 'onion' he means Venice or Iraq or New Jersey, I have no idea (although I think New Jersey unlikely). But I don't care. I'm not going to die on the god-damned boat with Lubert, and for that I'm eternally grateful.

BELLA: Floating down here in the yacht cabin, I realize that there is a valuable lesson I've learned from this experience. You have to let go of the anger.

BELLA: Lubert approaches me with an aggrieved look on his face.

"I know, Mark, the whole trip, I haven't heard a single word of thanks from you. Not a single expression of gratitude for my having paid for everything—the surprise, the boat, the reasons—"

"Lubert, you're absolutely right. And I apologize."

"Really?"

"Really. From the bottom of my heart, I want to tell you how appreciative I am for everything."

"Absolutely, yes. Lubert, could you do me a favor?"

"Sure, especially since you're being so gracious."

"I have the most splitting headache. Would you need going up on deck and asking Uday to lower the volume on his stereo a bit?"

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THE OVERACHIEVERS



Clint Eastwood gets honored and Elia Kazan gets ignored. Is this justice?

ELIA KAZAN WILL BE EIGHTY-eight this September, and under ordinary circumstances that would be cause for celebrating and celebration. Not that Kazan has ever wanted to be ordinary—he is after all in American show business. But as time goes by, even his astonishing career record needs to be reissued for an age that easily re-

calls Question Time and Clinton Kazan among the "greats."

Fifty years ago this coming December, Kazan directed the first stage production of *A Streetcar Named Desire* and he was as good a founder of that enterprise. Because he was so vibrantly creative, as personally driven, and as his emotional as the playwright, Tennessee Williams, was all those things only harnessed at Kazan's command: the play and made it his own. He insisted to believe in the play as much as Elia Blanche Dubois, to be portrayed Marlon Brando's Stanley as the public sensation of the opening. In boosting *Kismet*'s vitality, Kazan made the play more comfortable or compelling for himself, and in doing so he raised the social pressure and laxation of the work.

He did many other things on stage, as well as they could be done—*The Skin of Our Teeth*, *My Darling Clementine*, *Death of a Salesman*, *Center Stage*, *Camelot*, *The Hot Roof Street*, *Of Youth After the Fall*. As a director and teacher of actors, he won, with Lee Strasberg and Robert Lewis, international shipping when came to be known as the Method, or the Actors Studio style. As such, he brought a creative intensity of hard won natural behavior to the stage and then carried it into the arena where it was most suited—Hollywood. He became a movie director, and after early years of uncertainty he found his own personal self-ownership, with *On the Waterfront*, *East of Eden*, *Baby Doll*, *A Face in the Crowd*, *Wild River* and *Johnny Lie* *One*.

I don't think there are quite "great" works in the way that, say, *Banquet*, *Batman*, *Moussaka*, *Chin*, and *Willie* are great *Wonders*. Still, the measure of pain, passion, yearning, beauty, melodrama, and special pleading, in *East of Eden* is uniquely and unforgettably

American. I doubt if anyone who saw it as a vulnerable age can get it out of his or her head. *And then* I begin that Kazan helped insert James Dean in such as to be part to Stanley Kowalski. The violent, emotional, mountainous American male, circa 1950, owed a great deal to Kazan—largely because of the intensity with which the director observed his own confusion and the way no one fully understood him.

Kazan wrote several novels too. They sold well in the theaters and reviews, no matter that they're not very good. But those books should not obscure the glorious triumph of his autobiography *A Life* published in 1980, which is one of the best books ever written on being in the director and in film in America. *A Life* is also an indispensable part of the record, revealing that, in April 1950, Elia Kazan helped his own career and surely damaged those of others by testifying before, and naming names for, the House Committee on Un-American Activities.

I don't mean to relight the battle (beyond noting that this act of courage and trenchantly aware Kazan's discovery of this own nature, which was improved his life). What he did was to serve himself serving, and understandable. It was a stronger sense of the drama he directed on and the small or otherwise he sought to understand, that the deed has not been forgotten, even if all or most of the people he named are (I think) dead now. There is a fiction in Hollywood, or in what we might call film studies as a whole, that takes the righteous and legitimate view that Kazan's behavior should not be officially honored for what is known as "life achievement."

Let the work speak for itself, they say in all its fallacies and compromises. Kazan has never complained about that, and neither would I. Indeed, the whole case of Kazan only deserves a rather skeptical light on "life achievement" awards. But in recent years, it has become painfully evident that those institutions that make such awards—every

one from the Academy and the American Film Institute to a several dozen film festivals that look for big events—have pointedly ignored Kazan. There has been talk about it. Articles have been written. I was myself present at deliberations by the San Francisco Film Festival, which was trying to find a film director good enough and alive enough and likely to come to town to collect the award. I observed that, in all artistic aspects, Kazan dwarfed most of the names being considered. To which someone in the group replied, "Over my dead body."

Here or less the same has happened in most places. In January this year, the New York Times noted that both the Los Angeles Film Critics Association and the American Film Institute had "ignored" Kazan. There may not have been actual votes against the man, but nevertheless the critics made their award to Roger Cornum, while the AFI went with Martin Scorsese.

And then the tale. I understand and accept the urge to make some example of Kazan—my guess would be that he understands it himself and is somewhat strengthened by having shed good consciences. But if not Kazan, Roger Cornum? You see, the associations and the institutions and the festivals have to give the damned award to someone. For the AFI, that award ceremony has been a TV night that serves major income. Similarly, that's why the Academy has to keep giving Oscars away to sustain its whole enterprise. But as time goes by and our ranks number fewer and fewer, increasingly "special" or even *divine* filmmakers, the choices become all the more stressed and embarrassing. Kazan's longevity has proved his job as the system.

Not that Roger Cornum deserves such envious contemplation. It's not his fault that he's a leatherstocking next to the Lubans-like face of Kazan. As for Scorsese, only fifty-five this year and a Lubans report, there is a view that says give him the award quick, before he gets any worse.

There are other points, more complex and far more confounding. Kazan behaved badly, but most film directors do, sooner or later, for there is an art or a business in which many human compromises are called for (and glossed over). The more we know about Hollywood's "greats" (which means getting past the publicity machine of their

celebrity), the less easy it is to keep them simple. Kazan, Joseph McBride, vice-president of the L. A. Film Critics Association, contributed a very good letter to *The New York Times* outlining the case for ignoring Kazan. And then in the *Midwest* whose excellent book on Frank Capra (AFI Life Achievement winner in 1981) taught us to see the star that Capra could be.

And let us remember that the *Midwest* never had the loss of love to wonder if because a number of corporate—Paramount, Universal, MGM, such as Jerry Fox, Warner Bros., Columbia, and so on—agreed to enforce it. They resolved not to employ the people named. That was brutal, illegal, cowardly, and standard operating procedure. But

there are the companies that still write the checks in Hollywood and that take the money to sustain the American Film Institute, the Academy, and the so-called hierarchy of Hollywood. And no one has checked them for the *Midwest*.

Rather, Hollywood is allowed to plow on with the same blind optimism that it awards enough Jean Hersholt Humanitarian awards, then surely does believe and human improvement will settle on Beverly Hills like snow. Just so, if we give the Nobel Peace Prize often enough, won't peace break out? And let the public be left with up with the hands of it all.

Such thoughts lead us to the case of Clint Eastwood—what got the AFI Life Achievement Award last year. We all love Clint, don't we, and all his children? Such a handsome, rolicking survivor, so much his own man. Well, perhaps. There is also a case to be made that he is a limited, efficient, and impersonal director and an actor of very near and dangerous range; for example, he is the kind of actor whom Kazan (as reported director of players, substitute or else) would never have dreamed of casting. Clint is an outstanding producer as very smart about audiences and pitiable myth; a shy master of self-protection; brilliant in staying within his limits, conversational, practical, and quiet step by step simultaneously processing himself as self-sufficient and sucking up our love and support. But in the end,

with Eastwood, the sense of life, humanity, and art is circumscribed by the star's agonized—the hapless victim in *Unforgotten* cannot resist turning himself back into a magnificent act of death.

There was a book published last year, Richard Schickel's *Clint Eastwood*. A biography it was well written, full of

insights, very useful, and enormously respectful to Clint. I should declare that the author is a friend of mine and that the book was published by my publisher, Alfred A. Knopf. The book is also a helpless piece of art polishing. It was written by Dick Schofield, his is the copyright. I am certain that Mr. Eastwood had no contractual say over the text. He did not read it. The book was built out of a long friendship between Schickel and Eastwood, and every word is true.

Why would Eastwood do that? Why would Schickel? Why would Knopf promote the book through their uneasy joint appearances by the two men? Well, Knopf likely hoped for better sales than it got. Schickel, I think, was genuinely won over by Eastwood, who has great, strong inner charm when he wants, as well as unrolled charisma. Being with Clint can make you feel very privileged—and it is a reward he handles carefully.

Schickel is also very generous to Eastwood and to its own wish to address the man, his presence, and his quiet celebrity. It's more than that: it's grubby, mean, and selfish in his life, and it's some measure of how readily Eastwood has campaigned—in Europe, then at home—for susceptibility, cinema, and "life achievement" awards. For Eastwood, I think, this book is a kind of price bid. But Eastwood is not the writer to do his own life. He is not as successfully self-aware as Kazan. And so the actor, under I will slide by the correctness of the judgments that Kazan should be the "obscure" (I know the obscenity will be huge and amazing) of a great figure has passed on.) But I would like to suggest, for the rest, a monument on "life achievement" pills or at least that they be recognized with, say, the waitress that Groucho married for Margaret Dumont. ■

MONEY TALKS

Patrick Grady, vice-president of Wisconsin National Life, one of the nation's leading issuers of annuities. "That's because your typical annuity buyer is not financially sophisticated, and buying an annuity through a bank gives him added confidence that he's not going to be ripped off."

But that confidence can be misplaced. The banks bear no liability for these policies—and sometimes even the underwriter doesn't. There are actually two kinds of deferred annuities: variable and fixed. With a variable annuity, you control how the insurance company invests your money—stocks, bonds, money-market instruments. That means that you, not the company, take responsibility for picking good investments. You might earn 6 percent or 30 percent or nothing at all. The insurance company guarantees you nothing.

In most cases, an investor in a variable annuity would be better off buying shares in growth stocks like, say, Microsoft or Intel. These fast-growing companies don't pay any dividends but plow their profits back into the busi-

ness, so you don't face a tax bill—at least not until you sell the shares. And then your profits will be taxable only as capital gains, as opposed to ordinary income. Or you could buy a top investment-grade municipal bond and collect the interest completely tax free. About the only advantage to variable annuities is that your funds aren't held in the insurance company's general pool of assets but are kept in a separate custodial account. If the company goes bust, you don't lose a dime.

With a fixed annuity (which is what nearly all immediate and most deferred annuities are), the insurance company guarantees a minimum return—currently around 3 or 4 percent a year. But to earn this return, the company gets to invest your money as it sees fit, typically investing it into its general pool of assets. If the company goes bankrupt, you could wind up losing out.

This is no joke. Since the start of the 1990s, at least four hundred thousand—and by one estimate, a million—annuity holders have lost money as a result of such disasters.

But if you're bound and determined to invest in a deferred fixed annuity, how do you know which one to buy? Marie Weiss of Weiss Research, a leading authority on annuities, offers the following pointers:

1) Check out "guaranteed rates" carefully. "Normally, they're good for only the first year," says Weiss. "After that, they're reset annually, and the yield is usually much lower than the first-year rate. Our research has turned up plenty of 'teaser' rates, in which the yield drops by as much as two thirds in the second year."

2) Read the fine print regarding "surrender charges." Most annuities will let you cash out 47 percent surrender fee if you cash in your policy after the first year. After that, penalties decline on a sliding scale, ending after seven years. "Don't buy any annuity that has a surrender fee higher than 7 percent," says Weiss. "There are much better deals available."

3) Avoid any annuity for which the underwriter charges you either front-end or annual maintenance fees. Auke Weiss, "Why should you pay an up-front fee for the privilege of buying what the underwriter wants to sell anyway—especially when banks are being paid commissions to do the selling? If the annuity carries any fees at all, don't buy it."

4) Finally, and most important, forget about whether the bank that's marketing the annuity is strong; check out the soundness of the underwriter. This is absolutely crucial for deferred fixed annuities, says Weiss, because the underwriter's going to control your money for many years.

And don't assume that the big rating agencies like Moody's, A.M. Best, and Standard & Poor's publish trustworthy data. Those agencies are actually paid by the companies they rate. If an underwriter doesn't like the result, it can prevent it from being published.

The table on the opening page lists ten annuities that meet with the approval of Weiss Research, which doesn't take money from the companies it rates. Weiss doesn't recommend buying an annuity from any company that doesn't rate at least a B-; if you do, you'll be adding needless risk to an investment that doesn't have much going for it, aside from the ease of access to assets.

You can reach Christopher Flynn by e-mail at CFR@CPR@aol.com.

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LAST DAYS OF NAJIBULLAH

The entire twentieth century now hangs from a rope in Kabul

SOMEWHERE THE DOGS HEAR the gun below, the armies hurrying, the dogs yowling, the dogs yowling, the violence that approaches. Then come the shock waves of bomb blasts rubbing the windows and the lights of the *minarets*—some like red droplets whipped from a wind, others floating up like orange bubbles, and burning in too smoky flames—also blinding, waking, making bursts in the hills like a single light rising back and forth, and fingers rising on creases, trunks, all, for the first several seconds, in absolute silence, and then the distant sounding sounds and little pops like ice cubes in a drink, no bigger than that, until never positions start up loudly enough to knock a person off a chair.

Tonight, with the October moon to see by, the old factions inside the MIGs and SUIs over this capital of Afghanistan not long after nightfall and twice more before dawn, and after that they come two or three times daily.

After several days, our faction, the faction surrounding us, which saved Kabul last month without, as has recently been said, a shot being fired, except throwing so much precious ordinance after the borders, the invisible troops rules above.

Nobody likes this new faction. It doesn't seem much interested in self-protection, public opinion, the propaganda war. And it doesn't seem particularly intrigued by military strategy. Its fighters have a poor reputation as warriors. Rather than General and Soldier, they call one another *Muamir* and *Student*—Mullah and Taliban.

The most fundamental of the Islamic fundamentalists, the Taliban fac-

tion rose out of the southern city of Kandahar. At press conferences, its members continually invoke the name of Allah. Claiming a number of recent victories, the information minister states that they come from Allah. Three children have been killed in the air raids but by the grace and power of Allah many bombs have fallen into the sand without exploding.

THE HOTEL INTER-CONTINENTAL LOOKS out on everything from a central height, it's one of Kabul's most prominent structures, visible from almost any point in the city. A guest building, half of it wrecked by shelling but half still serving clients. Just now, I'm the only guest at the Inter-Continental.

Some of the staff have moved into

a couple of the other rooms, and we live here, my staff and I, in stealth walking very softly in the halls, hardly ever raising our voices above a whisper, conforming ourselves to the great silence that fills the building, the silence of all the people who aren't here.

In the last two years the Taliban have managed to secure two thirds of the country and now they're taking the capital. Around them, the drug of Marxist apartments bubble, huge concrete buildings raised with Soviet aid and money, some half-finished, others partly destroyed by the war and the best up cars, the Russian-made Volgas and Ladas and Moskviches, long past chattering on black soot. Along the street, Afghans drive their small, staggering trucks, also Soviet-made trucks

Public conveniences clutter by, labeled COORD YOUR TAIL and WELCOME TO THE NEW WINDS push carts of humped four or six or twelve, each from forehead, others with broad, front, pointed, hump, hump, and, an wicker comes, shovels and heavy clothing. But the restaurants are dead, the schools, the courts, the university, all closed and not one foreign embassy open. Very little survives beyond the words of the Prophet and the Koran's coin soundings.

In the evening, I sit on my balcony with a pocket, otherwise never and watch the day fade and the moon rise. It seems as if the surrounding hills like a conflagration, almost as busy as the dawn, and it's understandable that one of the first Europeans to visit Afghanistan a British East India Company agent named Pottenger, was asked by two mullahs to write a dispute for them as to whether the moon was actually at so the sun. Understandable that he told them yes, the moon is ruled the sun.

The new faction has outlawed all music but is not bothered if I play the jazz program on the BBC, because it is a

Westerner, I'm past all punishment, I can't be sued, I'm going to Hell.

The elections are stopped, but we have electricity four hours a day, also a few minutes of hot water in the morning or afternoon. The women in the restaurant are very much that—people who wait, hardly moving and having almost nothing to say to one another until I appear to ask what's available today. Eggs, bread, lamb. Green or black tea or bottled water. There's never anything else. I always tip them ten thousand of their money. I never eat in my room. I take each meal in the restaurant while they stand and wait. I don't think they mind. It seems to give them pleasure, serving as my silent hosts. Among the Afghans, it's said, the two most important aspects of living are hospitality and revenge.

FOR TWO DAYS, THE FOREIGNER POTTENGER and his brother dangle by their necks, dead, from a red and white traffic-control tower in the capital's center, their eyes swollen shut, mouths and nostrils stuffed with cigarettes and paper money, their blood dripping onto the curb beneath. On the concrete wall behind them, a very fresh looking billboard depicts a dark fat man in a bright Kabuli-style robe, one Arabic script. THERE IS NO GOD BUT ALLAH and MUHAMMAD IS HIS PROPHET.

And what is this platform that is serving, now, as Najibullah's scaffold?

"This is the traffic-police station," a passerby explains. "If an accidental driver will have some problem he is going to solve it. And this is the blood of Najibullah, also has been a blood."

In this case, the street is Ariana Avenue, named for the pre-Islamic kingdom that flourished here in Afghanistan four thousand years ago. But anywhere along the line drawn between the old Kabul and the new world, this scene might be portrayed, anywhere from eastern Africa to the southern edge of Russia—from Algeria to Chetchnya, at the cold war's end, this modern tableau from an ancient body war materializes out of the most Twentieth Century Man: dead in the street and the first of Islam raised above him, boys from the new faction posing beside Najibullah's corpse.

AFRIM, THE NIGHT DISK CLUB, and a couple of his friends have taken it up on themselves to keep me informed.

They race around the city for us, thus any whose telephone spurs has been destroyed, serving as my wires to the world, getting damage reports, reports of skirmishes, news about peace talks, etc., just as the war continues.

Conversing almost always in whispers with people who speak only the most rudimentary English, I'm beginning to lose my own words, my tongue feels newly arrived or lost in my mouth, and the language of my thoughts is muffled and shy.

I know a few phrases in Pashto, and whenever some members of the new faction come around, I bow with my right hand to my heart and say, "Sangay Tabb!"—How are you, Student? Like all Afghans, they are quick to smile when smiled at. A lot of them smoke cigarettes, the sale of which has been banned but continues.

In the evening, a musician, one of the Taliban, sings the proper call in the downstairs of the Inter-Continental. In the amber, temporary light of the dusk, a few of the staff and a couple of Students listen to Radio Taliban. They've closed the other radio stations and the TV station, struck down satellite receivers from the roofs, smashed TVs and VCRs in the street. They've made themselves infamous by burning music and intimidating the embassies and frightened the women into invisibility and silence.

The staff insist that the Taliban go unarmored into their hotel, and for the most part they comply, plowing their worn rifles out front on a table by the revolving door and wondering up and down the stairs and halls. They're cautious folk, picked out easily by their greasy turbans and tattered boots, their ratty shawls and combat boots and Kabuli clothes. They've never seen a hotel before. They can't seem to land on a feeling, a response—dead, or terrified or amused? They could be here for as the Inter-Continental if they wanted to but they don't want to. They just want to see it.

NAJIBULLAH WAS THE SUCCESSION MAN, with a son and a husband, his mouth closed, Marxist educated, and therefore neglectful, maybe scornful, of Islamic precepts. The Twentieth Century Man, the Cold War Man which means, in this region, that he was Russia's kept.

During his rise, the Soviets kept him from harm, had him posted to Iran



Here is the new faction leader, the new faction leader (left) and his brother Chahar (right) after their execution by the Taliban in Kabul last fall.

when his rivals came to power, whisked him to Eastern Europe where his wasn't protection enough, brought him back to Afghanistan when they needed an '99. They made him head of the secret police for six years, whose job was sabotage, assassination, and torture. They promoted him to party secretary and president. When they pulled out in '99, they left him a large animal, and they kept him supplied against the numerous factions that warred against him and one another.

He lost so much weight that he was no longer fat and the people didn't recognize his corpse.

In his new job of president, he unveiled a new Najibullah, more generic, more humane, and the urban Afghans and most of the world's nations came to view him as the best among many unimpressive alternatives. Many Afghans believe he lost an election and have staged rallies that a coup the winner would have been Najibullah.

His brother Shabbar Ahmadzai became his security chief. General Dostum was his ally. Commander Massoud and his guerrillas were among their enemies.

As long as Najibullah had weapons, he could dominate the factions: the mujahideen, whose disagreements had degenerated into warfare. But if the Soviets fell apart and quit sending aid, his reign lasted only six or seven days.

Why did the Taliban kill Najibullah? "They are Pashtun," he claimed, he had nothing to fear from them. But they treated him horrifically, according to the reports, the vague tales, the rumors—they cut off his hair, shaved him behind a jeep through the streets, women from which any possible witnesses could be treated at the nine o'clock curfew, though no troops remained to enforce the curfew. Nobody knows exactly what they did or precisely why.

THE TALIBAN HAVE STOPPED THE chaos, the two forces of General Dostum and Commander Massoud at a mountain pass twenty kilometers north of town. Commander Massoud's group left the capital in September, just ahead of the arriving Taliban. Since then, he's

formed an alliance with General Dostum, who came down from his north-east stronghold.

Massoud left Kabul without a fight because he saw the city had seen enough destruction in the last few years. Now the current president, Rabbani, has fled north, and hardly anybody ever mentions him.

The fighting can go on for a few weeks more, during what passes for autumn in the high desert, cool, dry weather in a flat white light and chilly nights, without dusk or frost. Winter will prevent any advance, and there'll be no change in positions until spring brings new offensives, perhaps a victory and a defeat, perhaps a compromise.

The city lies in a desert basin ringed by jagged peaks—goliaths call them Young Mountains—and the fighting goes on in a ring almost entirely of dirt and rock rubble. But up there, both sides have destroyed the same small villages over and over, while here in the capital the damage has been less severe because the antiaircraft keeps the bombers far overhead.

Dostum, Massoud—they used to be Communists back when there were Communists but now Massoud is a "commander for the Islamic government" and Dostum is a "friend to the Islamic Society of America" and mainly a "friend to Talibanism." An Afghan military leader wages a contest for survival (and can't be won) if he won't occasionally treat major Dostum and Massoud have switched sides so many times, they were bored eventually to end up on the same one.

THE MULLAHS HAVE DECIDED THAT a government shall be formed, that ministers shall be opened. They've had me in their offices downtown, filling out forms, exploring myself, establishing an identity. They've asked my passport and assigned a young man who speaks English to follow me when I go out walking. He isn't funny, so he's introduced himself and suggested we go walking together. But I've said no because I dislike him.

I miss the brilliant streets and rooms of the United States. I don't want to stay in one religious scruple confined to the Soviet-manned passion for state security, state bureaucracy, the sweeping and the settling, the obscene, brooding intensity of the state with the life of every citizen.

At the Lion Continental, I go with the only paying customer. A few of the Taliban leaders seem to be staying here but it isn't clear whether they actually sleep here or just hold occasional meetings.

Sometimes a group of them stand below my balcony and look up, but they won't do more to disturb after three minutes; they leave me to my hovering code.

PEOPLE ARE NERVOUS THEY WON'T SHARE their own issues, lest the names become attached to their words and their words reach the ears of the Taliban, who make it clear they forbid what the Kuran forbids but have no sense whatever else they might prohibit and how serious might be their punishments. "I shouldn't meet with you," they say, but can't bring themselves to shut the door on a stranger. And so the rumors on Najibullah's appearance.

"He would have won an election," they say.

"The Taliban killed him because he had a following," they say.

"He had little communication with the outside world, very few visitors only the Red Cross doctor. He suffered many ailments, kidney stones."

"He took lots of medicine, he lost so much weight that he was no longer a fat man and as first the people didn't recognize his corpse. They didn't know this dead man."

"If he had lived long enough, who knows? Life is mysterious. Maybe he'd have turned into a legend like the Sultan Said Ahmad. The sultan married with Allah but he didn't die. For his people in trying to force the Allahing to send all souls to paradise, the sultan ate on his throne in a cave in the region of Leger with his right hand channel forever to Heaven."

THE UNITED NATIONS SPECIAL-MISSION COMPOUND in downtown Kabul is not about walls, brick walls, barbed wire, spiked gates with spiked gates, and sending complacent business, using the buildings just like the Red

Cross compound, the Swiss the Chaldean compound, the abandoned embassy compounds, all the official compounds in regions where power and strife have devolved into the strange nonconventional ways of our era.

Najibullah arrived here one night in 1992. His enemies—mujahideen factions that had barred him as the Russian proxy after the Soviets abandoned the country in '89—were closing in. Russians were fleeing on Kabul. But it looked as if the city might be spared a battle in the streets, if only Najibullah would depart.

In the very things they are doing, in frantic darkness, in the final moments before disaster, an envoy assembled a fragile agreement that would let Najibullah leave the country since in exchange for turning power over to Rabbani, who a secular man but not so much Russia's man. A plane waited in the airport to take him to India to join his family but the agreement fell apart. Dostum, his longtime ally, had wanted order when the Russians stopped sending supplies in January 1992 and was now Najibullah's enemy. Dostum stationed his fighters on the roads outside the capital and at the air-

port. To keep himself safe, Najibullah took refuge with his brother Shabbar, his bodyguard, Jafar, and his male secretary, Tuleis, at the UN compound, where he lived in limbo until the night four years later when the Taliban took the city.

At the UN compound today, everything is bright UN blue, even the plastic boxes containing the flower beds.

"You can see his apartment from here. I can't let you go inside. No one is allowed to go inside," a man who knows but refuses to be named tells me. No parking but a vague note behind a wall of sandals with one window looking on the light. "But he had everything. He had his satellite, his VCR, an exercise gymnasium, a game room. He never went out of the compound. It wasn't safe. His security was very limited. This was his only world."

Another one says he spoke as Najibullah personally on the phone the night the UN president died. "No, he wasn't afraid. The UN had passed long orders that followed the fall of the Soviet Union. I am not permitted to tell you where we went once Najibullah was virtually without protection, but he told me, 'I have nothing

to fear from the Taliban. They are Pashtun, I am Pashtun.' He avoided the Taliban as his final liberation."

RESEMBLES THE LION MARIAN LIVES IN his walled compound at the Kabul Zoo, cuffed from his natural domain, blinded and nearly toothless, attended by his mate.

Officially, the zoo's gates are closed, but great numbers of the young Striped, the country boys charged with keeping order, find compelled to keep order at the zoo. The huge bear gets the most attention, a couple of girls staring at it for hours, although the bear does nothing but stand still. Eight Taliban watch four monkeys waddle and leap from a hoop. The bald eagle stands on his perch in his cage without companions or audience. The three bears, one of them sick and staggering, attract no interest at all.

Once, the Kabul Zoo housed ninety varieties of animals and got a thousand visitors a day, but in the era of fighting that followed the fall of the Soviet Union and then of Najibullah, the people stayed away, and the animals found themselves in a place more dangerous than any forest or jungle. For ten days,



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LETTER FROM AFGHANISTAN

the elephant ran, as circles, acrobatics, and dancers twirled her and she died. As the shelling went back and forth, the tiger and lioness, the ostriches, the elephant were carried away to pasture. The ivory was captured and the beads flew like into the heavens from which the rockets rained. Turtles and emerald-green parrots fired back and forth at each other in the street out front.

**"We don't
need votes,
we don't
need cheers,"
the voice
chants.
"We're fighting
for God."**

The two sets in the antler-embroidered swath that runs through the middle of Kabul are the mosque's kind of ruminant battles: low mud-walled residences that front only a little distance look like ruins from antiquity, larger buildings deconstructed and unrecognizable, here and there a grave mound rises in the street, as the roadside knee-high towers of piled rocks warning of the presence

of land mines. In the danger zones, Afghan women wear purple face veils and blue Kevlar vests apart in the dust, peeling at rubble with shovels and brushes like archaeologists of unceremonious death. Red Cross men with aluminum medical kits the size of large suitcases wait beside orange stretchers.

A dump truck swings past, carrying Taliban discarded around on side-ack gas, and an loudspeaker broadcasts a voice chanting in Pashto: "We don't need votes, we don't need cheers, we're fighting for God and for peace in Afghanistan." Several jump off to join the others observing the 200's hell-demon survivors.

Murjan and his mate seem only marginally attractive to the Taliban. Two or three expressionless boys look down into the vacant lot where the house lives.

A couple of years back, an Afghan warrior jumped down into the compound to denounce his coverage. But he got too close to the female, and Murjan averaged himself on all his captives by scaring the intruder to pieces. Soon after, the man's brother took revenge by night, tossing down into the pit a hired grenade whose blast only dug the left half of Murjan's head yet failed to kill him.

Murjan was a Communist, too—he came from East Berlin. Now he's a true Afghan, having enjoyed such hospitality as can be made available under hardship, and having tasted revenge, tasted it from both sides its sweet and bitter portions.

A French dentist repaired the hawk's jaw to the degree that he was not now. The injuries are such that in his collapsed head his eyes and mouth stay perpetually open, and when he lies still he looks stuffed. But Murjan has no idea about his fate, aware of his own rights.

"I SHOULDN'T HAVE talked I've said too much," they say. "Don't say my name."

This one witnessed everything in the UN compound the last night of Najibullah's life. He won't speak his name; he doesn't want his face remembered. He's hazy, he wants to tell what he's seen but only to a trusted friend. "Please," the friend says, "I must be nameless."

At 1:30 A.M., Taliban parked outside the compound. Fifteen pickup trucks full of Taliban, eight, nine, ten in each pickup—"a lot, a lot"—dismounted, in other words. They asked the women. Where's Najibullah? He tried to detain them with excuses, but they beat him and pushed him aside and entered and searched the buildings. In the apartment, they found Najibullah, his brother Shalghar, the bodyguard Jalair, and Talibi the secretary.

They mistreated Najibullah along in such a way that the others believed they were taking him to safety and rescued that they, his companions, shouldn't be left behind. Even when the Taliban cut for themselves several meters of plastic UN-blue armbands hose from the garden, his companions failed to understand what was happening and felt aggrieved, abandoned, when the Taliban took Najibullah away.

Jalair, Talibi, Shalghar—they argued among themselves as to what to do, waiting unprotected but virtually free in the compound. They decided to wait for word from Najibullah. At

2:00 A.M., the Taliban came back for Shalghar, the brother, again ignoring the demands of Talibi and Jalair that they be blasted, too. But before the dawn was whole over Kabul, a night windstorm came and told them that the two brothers were hanging dead and delirious from the traffic tower on Arman Avenue.

IF WERE THE SECULAR RABBIT-GOVERNMENT, not the Taliban, that put up the power of the last and Kalashnikov for Allah that served as backdrop to Najibullah's persecution. For such weapons are the part of the Cold War Men to persuade the people of their faith in the Koran came too late. The Taliban have no doubt as to who must sincerely and faithfully wield the gun in the name of God.

Fighting—it's what they do, it's all they do, there's nothing else to do. Afghanistan has ever been the buffer zone between lower and higher Central Asia, its groups played off against one another by neighboring states. The Taliban are said to be supported by even created by Pakistan, the neighbor on the east. Uzbekistan on the north is said to support other forces, particularly General Dostum's.

At their press conferences, they state again and again that their victories come from God. They predict that a large Taliban uprising will engulf Dostum, Massoud, and all the others, perhaps Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, even Russia. On this, they grow vague, but they say they stand ready to help Muslims in other countries.

They say they're establishing Murjan's sham's courts, installing or reactivating, pending process, getting the power back on in Kabul, clearing out the land mines, opening the roads—they want to get the schools open, but proper schools. They want the women to be useful again, but properly useful.

We're accustomed to imagining the chaos of the coming century as neither male nor female nor belonging to any nation, an Information Nether equipped for negotiating the new face markets and twisting through cyberspace. But in much of the world, the Twenty-first Century Man has nothing but hunger and a gun and a religion. "We have bread and prayers," the Taliban say. "We don't need anything else." ■

ANOTHER GREAT EXPLORATION. LAUNCHED BY CANOE.

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Esquire

The Swank Life

Welcome to the Cocktail Nation, where you can drink martinis, swing to Bobby Darin, take her back to your bachelor pad, and still feel good about yourself in the morning
By Randall Rothenberg

PHOTOGRAPH BY MICHELLE LAMON

ENTERTAINMENT WEEKLY 71

THIS IS THE 999999, AS IN "DRESSED TO," AND more people are.

Men are wearing wing tip shoes, some on narrow toes, others, a la Dean Martin in *Cheer*! Here, knee wide collars spreading out over the laps of gilette-free jokers or (like Joey Bishop, sure thing) cardigan sweaters. There's more than a little shirked. The women's attire varies. Some with padded shoulders, hair with veils, and glove-length gloves, the spirit of Ida Lupino, beyond done, vinyl heart boots, and tapered miniskirts evoke the Playboy Mansion of the Donna Michelle era. All make their way to the second floor of Flamingo East, the New York bar that hosts the weekly party. There, *Beats to the Wild*—not Supersoul's original rock recording but an easy listening version by Ench Light and his Light Brigade—glides from the speakers.

Kath Gandy is surveying her domain. Tall and somewhat gaunt, his black hair parted in the middle and powdered back from his high forehead, Keith is wearing his "greeting only" three-button black suit, white shirt with two button collar, and silk scarf. He looks mawkish. As *"Windy"*—not the Association's original but an instrumental easy listening version by the Sounds of Our Time—wells up, he struts about his Fine Village party attendees and their motivation.

"Used to say," Keith says "Sunday nights New York, it's tough to come out. More people work. Here, there are a lot of freelance artists and street-fair kids."

"It's such a relief from the heaviness of techno and house," offers Steve Span, one of Keith's two deejays. At *Forevermore*, Span—whose deejay name is Steve Bonelli—has nearly two decades on Keith and most of the 999999's clientele. A second-store owner in Brooklyn's Park Slope neighborhood, Steve has made a second career out of this new party scene, pulling from his close dozers of forgotten vinyl albums that for years he died not sell friends he cheated. But when Raygun's *Space Age Bachelor Pad Music*—a collection of decades old recordings marked by woodies

at the crowded tables that line both sides of the barroom. The rest are crowded up to a bar framed by red velvet curtains and uplit by pink neon. There, a lone server, her breasts peeking from a black cocktail dress, serves up cosmopolites and martinis by the dozens from a Red Carpet cocktail shaker.

Keith puts down his dirty Reddy martini (gin, vermouth, and a crushed olive) and starts up a bubble machine for the 999999's first show. A woman dressed in early Jane Chinese and a baby-dirty-doppelpager take the stage to sing "Mame." "They like to sing when they're in the mood," observes Dave. He spots a girl he knows. "Where's mame?" he asks. He looks his troubles over to the second deejay, Steve.

It's well after 1:00 A.M. A young man in a porkpie hat pushes through the bar to make a request.

"Dude," he tells Steve. "Do you have any 'Three'?" Steve, who is placing the needle on the dance from Star 740—the television original but an easy-listening version by an organ orchestra called Kings Road—doesn't even bother looking at him. "No," he says. "Not here."

No, not here. This is the Lounge.

AFTER A THIRTY-FIVE-MINUTE DANCE, THE LOUNGE is open again. Vamps in cocktail dresses and magis in fedoras are stinking inside to pass their souls into the lightbulb glasses that also hold their hearts. In the background, play the smooth sounds of a generation past.

During the three years of its ascendancy, Lounge has gone by many names, each of which captures but a small dose of its total gestalt: *Space Age Bachelor Pad Music*, *Martini Culture*, *Cocktail Nation*. But Lounge is so much more than a mixed drink, retro music, and a fine eye.

Lounge is French, and moist, and cool. Lounge is dirty on. Lounge Prizes and those cads the Pink. Lounge is like bent and hot systems. "Lounge," says Wayne Wickless, "is a lifestyle."

A producer at Capitol Records, Watrous has seen a set of thirteen compact discs he used and called the Ultra-Lounge series—featuring such forgotten acts from the

offices and streets as Phil Johnson, Les Baxter, and New Storm—each side of some three hundred thousand years in the past twelve months, recording progressions. Music turns over and emboldening, Capitol to scholarly note additional Ultra-Lounge discs this year.

The company has compiled a matching compilation can have come from *Blanco* (Richard M.), *DCC* (Mama's a Bachelor's Day), and *BLCA* (The House of Space Age Pop). Individual music artists—among them Joan Garcia Regard, Martin Denny, and the Joe Satriani—have been in such reduced volume that music readers are dramatically expanding their

easy-listening sections to accommodate them, making the Lounge phenomenon a rare bright spot in a recording industry undergoing its worst slump this decade.

"People who were listening to *Nervosa* albums two years ago," says Frank Davis, the creator of the new *Via Davis's Lounge of Self Indulgence* (www.chocolatevibes.com/~davis/lounge.html), "are saying today, 'Hey, Jack London can wait!'"

So is a growing clutch of neo-Lounge acts. Some have already shown some attention. Like *Cocktail Nation*, Joey Bag and Voodoo Daddy. Friends of Dean Martin, and Iggy & the Futuristic Five. In some cases, artists old and new are joining in a cognitively consistent merger of retro and neo. "Henry Mancini tunes have provided the foundation for two albums by alternative rockers this past year, while Hollywood Records is due to release a Lounge collection whose tracks include Steve Lawrence and Eydie Gorme performing Soundgarden's "Black Hole Sun" backed by a thirty-piece orchestra.

Lounge has spawned a visible scene up and down the coast. In Los Angeles, mergers—well before the movie *Damage*—have been moving from the Douglas Room (where Merry and Flynn once "Bliss Moon") to the L.A. Lounge, a Polynesian playhouse where the hottest neo-retro group the Blue Hawaiians serves as house band. In New York, the swing band Best Positive alternates between the ultimately hipster and the ultimately suburban Great Bar on Earth, while weekly drag-baked gatherings draw hundreds to downtown taverns.

Like the Nipponese club *Le Moulin* (called 22 club), nightclub new and old have witnessed an infusion of new things through forty-somethings, finding their alternative to alternative, rock to funk's and Bruce's in San Francisco, the Elektra/Kokoro Lounge and the Wildflower's Polynesian Room in Vancouver, Philadelphia's Poo Spa, Club Velvet in Minneapolis, and Oakland's Supper Supper Club.

"Since we've been doing this," says gaunt Boston resident Bruce Clave, a member of Combustible Edison, the best of the neo-Lounge acts, "you can see the rise of martini bars. The tiger thing is tied in with it. The Supper movie. Supper clubs with three page martini menus. What happened, that all this started coming back?"

PLATO BARE ONE ANSWER. "MUSIC," HE WHISPERED IN THE REBEL "OVERTIME EVERYTHING."

Vince Sanjula has another. "Life is very difficult today in many ways, especially socially. The list of ones in huge inhibiting. Unpleasant. That's why a lot of this has to do with the formality of another time," says Sanjula. Forty-two, who descended into the L. A. Lounge scene to produce the recent *Sonnet*, "In a world where sex rules have broken down, erudition and overeducation, that whole Lounge thing allows for a more relaxed and preferable relationship between men and women."

Maybe that is the key to the Lounge revival. Its success "signifies" (that reveal a subculture's "bourgeois identity" in the words of French cultural historian Dick Hebdige—see

signature of sex. Mysterious, subterranean, post-up, pre-vocative, child, say, suggestive, pre-sexual-revolution sex.

It does anything more public than a cigar? Or a tin, that carved wooden symbol of Lounge, whose presence fully screens pagan kits. And what of the martini glass itself? A serious (homophonic) is it. As Adam holding up the world, nearly beyond all belief, yet with an easy bone, narrow smile, and flared top, it is the bazaar brand of Hugh Hefner's fifteen fifties.

Formaldehyde purr? Perhaps. "This isn't a piece of art," insists Keith. "It's a party."

But cocktail lounges, their neon martini glasses leering solemnly at the carnival and the forbidden, have long symbolized a serious harmony in a rotten world. Like postwar film noir, the cinematic genre in which urban drags, hard-boiled detectives, and go-sloaked characters play to prominent a role. Lounge may represent what critic Frank Kermode calls the restoration of a "placid order" in a society in which sexual roles have been damaged by postwar changes: world war, feminism, AIDS. Cocktail Culture's bedrock aesthetic—modernist furniture, open bar, with-in records, the absolute last, in-to equipment, and plant yet self-aware girls—also signifies, if not male domination, an orderly reconciliation of sex and singlehood. Ask today's Lounge crowd why they like the scene and they're liable to answer in the politically correct fashion of party pooper Lou "Tale" Scorsia: "When these are done and men are problems."

Which has drawn no small share of the "How much of a lack is the retro atmosphere of heavy babes and guys with shiny hair?" around the *Waltz* 'n' Salsa, in a virulent attack on the Lounge scene. Martin Clave, a said, is nothing but the same reactionary movement that Bess and Ignatius rebelled against a generation ago. Lounge, said Salsa, is just "Republican ambience."

Could be. The fifties and the nineties, after all, share a lot of their Republican ascendancy. Outward propensity. Inner nervousness that a could alter any second, so why not come up to play for a drink and a hole? Or why not? Lounge is middle class where people's room music, comes from American Dependence, a founding member of Combustible Edison.

Yet the fantasy it calls up is anything but covert. Film is a conscious model for the Lounge lifestyle, whose music and milieu symbolize that purely American notion of self-cultivation. In the Lounge, anyone can be a George Raft—or at least act like one. No small matter why film and even television shows by the likes of Lalo Schifano and Frances La weigh so heavily in the repertoire of the Cocktail Nation. They allow Lounge to dress up and act out feelings down from years of a sample—and therefore more during time. George, Peppermint in *Blackout* at Tiffany, Ursula Andrews in *The Truth About Jean-Louis* (Branigan on A Men and a Woman). Take your pick.



Passing the like words like *Flamenco* with "The Millionaire" of *Combustible Edison*.

center "A lot of modern alternative rock is very negative—"Things suck and I'm unhappy about it," says Coen. But Eubank's Oppenheimer "can only take so much of that. We don't mix politics with our music."

Which is, in a not-soaring way, true: For Lounge was actually the most conservative concept they had as its goal perhaps the most political, even subtle, message imaginable—to overthrow the baby boom's iron grip on American culture.

IT WAS EADEN WERNER: A PIONEER OF THE LOUNGE movement and Keith Grady's spiritual godfather—who stands it, in a pure act of courage. For Byron Warner had loved rock 'n' roll roots rock, psychedelic rock, jazz. Hendrix, John Jayton. Then, just at the moment he'd become old enough to go to concerts and trip out, the rock establishment declared the stones over and replaced the black-light poster with Circle K.

"I was kind of upset," says Warner, a large, slacker thirty-year-old, "at rock 'n' roll fascism."

One day, returning through his parents' record collection, he came across a vinyl album by Tim Sweeney, a Person songster with a five-octave range who'd been major among mumble aficionados two decades before. He provided Warner with his name of refuge. He decided to collect, play and distribute his style of music, concerned broadly, in a one-man rebellion against the tyranny of the sanctioned consciousness.

Warner wasn't alone in his disdain for the desecrating hand of an official underground. By the late seventies, punk, too, was decaying the totalitarian influence of "rockism." Having their music for decades, some found their way to the twenty-five cent used-record bins, where, drawn by cover photographs of cocaine-clutching semipalmers, they began listening to Judas Priest's *Moss*, Marlene and Morrison and Les Baxter's *The Pleasure*.

But Byron began spreading his finds (they included, for these years at a drink shop, *Quincy's Color World* [Oshkosh]) to friends and colleagues. Like another revolutionary of the period, the *Avant-Garde* *Bluesman*, his medium was audiotape.

At first, his beneficiaries were graphic designers and underground cartoonists like him. Later, he began distributing the tapes through the Church of the SubGenius, a loose national organization of satirical anarchists that was founded in 1980 by the first *comedian* stand-up especially for the group. Byron invented the term "Spaced-Age Bachelor Pad Music."

The tapes found an audience. SubGenius Mark Moby embraced going his new-wave band Devo into a spy CD entitled *Big Lounging Devo*. SubGenius Mark Grooming went with *Engelbert's* cover of The Simpsons. SubGenius Lewis Chaud not only played the tapes on his show on WFMT, a free-form station on northern New Jersey, he persuaded Bar News Records, in Holbrook, to let him produce an *Engelbert* album. In licensing the tracks from *Person* releases, the tiny company nervously guaranteed the multinational giant that it would sell five thousand discs within two years.

Then a funny thing happened. Byron Warner called *Big Man* and a follow-up *White Man's World* by a Spunkling Press, sold a hundred thousand albums in total.

An even funnier thing happened. Byron Warner realized his attraction to Lounge was no longer ironic. "There came a point where I said, 'Well a minute. I really love that stuff now. I'm not making fun of it anymore.' I think it

had to do with finally coming to terms with my parents."

In other words, Lounge is a way to feel grown-up in a world so long dominated by a generation whose first name is Baby that any natural instinct of what it means to be an adult has evaporated. All that's left is a chronic fascination of the self, the self, which today's Lounge artist works a harder than most ambitious boomers save for Nick at Ninetowns. "Think about the filters," says twenty-five-year-old Eric Sack. "Lounge magazine: 'That's the last time you wanted to be an adult.'"

Others were going through similar transformations. Michael "the Millionaire" Cassidy had his epiphany in Las Vegas, where he'd moved mainly to continue a desecratory life as a moderately successful rock musician. But there, somewhere between a Wayne Newton show at the Mirage and Don Aiden's *Jubilee* (the sinking of the Titanic and Simon bringing down the temple, all with bare breasts and sex to music), he had his "conversion experience."

"I finally stopped out of my dream," says the thirty-five-year-old Cassidy, snapping at a cabdriver when he tells the tale, "and embraced my real culture." Out of his old alternative-rock band, Christmas, he converted Consumable Edition, whose repertoire includes spy jazz, country, and a torcher named Miss Lily Benquet singing "Cry Me a River."

Original Lounge artists (most of whom despite the identification, because, as crooner Jack Jones says, "the Lounge is where you work when you're not up to playing the main room") began to see a change in their audiences. For almost two decades, Mr. Danone says, his audiences consisted of men and women in his own cohort—"and I'll be sorry later in April." Earlier this year, in the dead of winter, he had a concert in Cheyenne, Wyoming. When he got to the hall, all seventeen hundred seats were filled. At one point, somewhere between "Rainbowlike You," "Night and Day," and other tunes from *Oliver!* *Love Song of the Century*, his first album in nearly a decade, Danone decided to sit whether anyone in the place was under forty. The room burst into applause.

In New York, Lounge kernels began slipping out from their coats. Chris Brick, a longtime vinyl archeologist, started selling Lounge compilation tapes from *Engelbert*, *Marlene*, *Denny*, and *Enoch Light* out of *Stylophone*, the clothing shop he owned in New York's SoHo. When finally reached by a customer a week, he and some partners decided to throw a party, which they called *Stylophone*. One of his customers was Keith Grady, freshly arrived from Boston.

Like Byron Warner, Keith was a self-satisfied outsider. He still recalls the terrible day in fifth grade when he was ridiculed for being the only kid who didn't know the John Cougar song "Jack & Diane." Lounge gave him a chance to be with without forcing him, or anyone else, to do the work to be up on it. "No one's looking anyone," he says. "No one's trying to be an artist." Lounge was inviting to anyone and everyone who simply wanted to look back, have a good time, and unleash their inner square.

"Everyone knows, deep down, that they are square," says Lily Breen. "Now, finally, everything is talking people it's okay. I was that way with Kurt Bachman for a while. I kept it hidden in my closet. The first step to loving something is when you can call it out of the closet and admit to everyone that you love it. And not feel you have to laugh at it."

Which is why Keith started the gonggong. "I wanted a nice place to drink, like a party at someone's house, without the intimidation of door policies, non-dollar drinks, or the need to get into the mesh bag if all you want to do is dance."

SULTRY SOUNDS WITH A TWIST

Music for 'tasteful', sippin', dancin', and lovin'. By Joseph Lanza

JUST AS THE PROPER TUNING tone piped from a ceiling speaker may help workers at the office, cocktail music supplies sprightly variations on familiar songs, never staying too far into abstract yet always creating an atmosphere enough to be its own form. As a result, the people in the lounge become stars of their own music, their conversations and wistful synchronicity, almost reflexively, in the melodies having their reveries.

Spanning many categories and, once, cocktail music combines the best of classical, jazz, country, and pop, from Martin Denny's exotic rhapsodies to Maurice's cascading strings to Lawrence Welk's bubbly champagne music.

Here are some albums and concert dates of the ancient persuasion to help you take life one small step. **John Danone and His Orchestra: *Jack Jones and Easy*** (Capitol). A candid after-epic was a mood-music master, who had no formal training as a conductor and got his authentic voice across to his musicians (most notably, Bobby Hackett) through wizard, and sometimes obscure, instructions. Judging by the millions of albums he sold, Danone made a savvy move with this second effort. Among his best (available on vinyl) only are ***Music, Marlene, and Engelbert*** (Capitol).

Apart from its luxurious album art, which promotes the cocktail lifestyle, the music is a decidedly low key

accompaniment to gracious living. Its slow orchestral arrangements court-tempted with trumpet are effective precisely because they are understated.

Don Howard: *Be Baby's Lover* (Capitol). By the late sixties, Glasco's orchestra was also playing with psychedelia, in this case, the addition of sitar to the mix in order to make these covers of songs like "Gone With My Head" larger in the head even longer than their originals.

Don Howard: *Love and Hope* (Ribbon). This double-length CD contains twenty-four hypnotic, almost covers of mostly romantic standards, ideal for soporifics. Recorded on the Dunes Place label, with live London Festival City, this collection includes standards such as "I'll Be Seeing You," "This Time," and "Long Ago and Far Away." **Ray Winstone: *Relaxation*** (Good Music). A forty-song double CD that captures the Tootsie Roll master of this great conductor-arranger's output. It includes his annual hit "Canadian Sunset" and a swell cover of Miles Davis's theme from *Alfred Hitchcock's Spellbound*.

SOME MAY WANT FORTUITOUS POOLS to go with their tunes. There are several crooners and classicists with discographies that now show styles as refined as a dry martini. Here are a few of my personal favorites



Ve Demme: *I Wish There Was* (Sony Music Special Products). Danone is among Sweeney's favorite singers, and this particular CD, put out by Sony Music Special Products, is also special for including arrangements by such easy-living greats as Percy Faith and Frank De Vol. **John Danone: *Jack Jones and Easy*** (Capitol). A double-length CD celebrating the single nightclub-combo sound of guitar and has remembrances of London's early days of playing in Los Angeles's 8th Club. Includes some releases on "Cry Me a River" and "Luna," along with wordless "doo-doo" on "Her Tolly" (love in the toilet) (Liberty). Here London treats the listener to her devil-may-care delivery on such famous torch songs as "The Man That Got Away." The album's tale track provides a bartender's recipe for heavenly "A Jigger of being / garnished with light / some lemon for crying / long unhappy nights / a dash of love dreams / then the with regret / shake well and pour / then drink and forget."

BAIT OF PURE HUMAN ANIMALS

LUNCH THE LOUNGEHOUSE DJ forgets his for *St. Keith*, explanation: in a white suit and shirt, black vest, and red bow tie, merely borrows his own back from Steve Span. And no one notices the painted cardboard box that substitutes for the great wicker basket. The throng, already captivated by the belly dancer's sword dance, cheer lustily when *Pease-Peggy*, a Louise Brooks look-alike in green silk, emerges from the box to the strains of an Eddie "the Shark" Koehn record that Spain somehow unearthed. When she is done, the room explodes in enthusiasm as "Harper Valley P.T.A.," not the Jeanette C. Rabinowitz but an early-1970s version by the Janice Lane Orchestra. The party is in overdrive.

Two such as "The songster is more crowded than it has ever been" so pulled that it is hard to dance. And with the increased audience has come a marked deterioration in style,

the cocktail dresses and heavy jackets are overwhelmed by Gap sweatshirts and -neon football-blue jeans.

Las Bajas has noticed a fair number of underbodies wandering into the neon-green fur boys, the bridge and tunnel crowd, "guys who heard that girls walk past me." Chris Brick, who started New York's first Lounge party two years ago, has seen it over. Currently, he's selling tapes featuring Czechoslovakian, Indian, and Japanese music of late-seventies disco music. "Two years from now," he says with confidence, "they'll all be playing the disco thing."

Keith Grady knows that his tastes will evolve, too. But he'll never abandon his ditty Bombay movies. "And I'll never stop listening to my Dean Martin records," he says. "What would I substitute?" ■

The giveaway:
Kevorkian with
his associate,
Joan Lind, in her
suburban Detroit
living room

Death and the Matron

Dr. Jack Kevorkian gets all the fame, but he is helped in his deadly labors by a cuddly grandmother who has a more than passing acquaintance with the fear of an imminent, painful demise. By Jack Lessenberry



PHOTOGRAPHS BY DANIEL F. FELD

women he'd never even kill himself (legal).

Sounded weird, too. No way, he said. Case closed.

Janet had to call Kevorkian with the bad news. "Too sorry," she said, starting to sob, when Kevorkian sniffly cut her off.

"There is nothing to be gained by talking further with you," he said and hung up.

"He can't deal with people who are not part of the plan," Janet says in her lecture.

"No, that's not it." Kevorkian retorts unconsciously. "I was looking for a place to do it, that's all." A place for Janet Adams, a fifty-four-year-old from Oregon with curly Alox hair, to do it. "You don't know how many places I checked," he says bitterly. "Motel, churches, clubs, funeral homes." Then the back room of a funky whip-and-chain boutique called Nir. Leather was draped here. (Today, the

her here never knew any of this.

"Or can't," he says now.

"When did you figure out Janet was transsexual?" I ask Kevorkian.

"I didn't," he says.

"Last week," Janet shoots back, laughing.

"Not then, empress," he says. "It was a very gradual thing." They finally met a few days after that first suicide, when a local TV station aired a panel discussion on what had happened. Janet came up to Kevorkian and gave him a big hug. "I am not one of those people who like to be touched," he declares. "I was thinking, Well, here's another Hemlock hypocrite. You can't trust me. My attitude was that this was not someone who would help."

After the show, she pulled him aside and urged him to get an attorney. He wasn't interested, he had considered the matter, and Doris insisting all along that there was no late apostrophe needed in Michigan. I thought the court would recognize that. When I didn't, neither was how corrupt the courts truly are."

In the end, Kevorkian realized he needed a legal champion, and he found his perfect match in Geoffrey Nels Pipher, who had studied drama in college, had been around England with the Moody Blues, and on his resume listed as his only hobby "kicking the biceps out of my opponents in court." They seemed to have little in common. Pipher liked expressive suits, beautiful blanda, champagne, fuzzy houses, stuff. Kevorkian was a loner who brought his clothes at the Salvation Army.

What they shared was a love of spraying in the bathtub. Kevorkian's wife, Beth, was in love with adolescent boys who liked to make mischief. Not long before they met, a large suburban hospital that both men despised had mailed at paying a judgment piper: No do the attorney get a court order and a van, called TV reporter, and began moving furniture out of the building until a diagnosed hospital bureaucrat appeared with a check.

"Unlaid that style," Kevorkian said. Days after Kevorkian had him in 1990, the thirty-nine-year-old lawyer was suing the apoplectic-landmarking the prosecutor on TV, firing missiles, giving him. The teacher charges were soon dismissed by a judge, who agreed that there was, indeed, no law against helping someone commit suicide.

Pipher joined the two others who were Kevorkian's closest allies—his sister Margo and Neal Neeb, a bluff medical-supply salesman who had known Kevorkian since the early 1960s.

He and Kevorkian had a strong bond, while a young man such as Pontus General Hospital, Neal had been a willing guinea pig for experiments that Kevorkian, then a young pathologist, was doing, transfusing cadaver blood. Once, Kevorkian gave both Neal and himself such a bad case of hepatitis that Neal's eyeballs turned orange. He, and the two siblings, survived.

Constantly, Janet worked her way in the rat tunnels, made arrangements, made herself generally useful. When Catherine Andropov came from Pennsylvania to seek final relief from her cancer in November 1992, Janet picked her up, drove her to Neal's house, and, for the first time, was allowed to be actively involved in the procedure. No one there realized this was not Janet's first assisted suicide.

"I had been active in helping people in an unassisted way," she admits—mostly gay men, at AIDS except through

Donor in the eighties. The victims of destroyed immune systems felt the need for a "soft landing" long before most other people did. Hemlock was a natural medium.

"I was a depository, or a repository, for pills, leftover pills, and people knew that," Janet says. Four times, she stood by an advice, console, and dispassionate as criminally all people disinterestedly did. The Log Cabin Republicans, the gay political group, gave her a special award in 1993 for her "counseling efforts" with AIDS victims and their families. She was also nobly disinterested.

"I never knew any of the until a couple years ago," Kevorkian says. "She never told me. I was amazed."

Death by pills and liquor had its drawbacks. "It took so much longer, and you always worried it would go wrong, which you never do with Dr. Kevorkian," Janet says. By the way, she says, "it close to me, it. I just can't call him Jack. I think it is terrible when people call him Jack. He's always the Doctor. Well, sometimes Doc. You can't say Dr. Kevorkian all the time."

Even though she was allowed to attend some early Kevorkian suicides, she still wasn't fully part of the team. For one thing, Margo, Kevorkian's pleasure but fiercely possessive older sister, one to this. Margo, a retired secretary, had taken on the roles of gatekeeper, watchdog, official assistant, and archivist. She had always lived for others. When their mother, Satana, a refugee from the Armenian holocaust, was dying of cancer, Margo took care of her and even—totally uncharacteristic to her mother—begged her physicians to help her die. (They refused.) Margo kept suicide records, welcomed confessions with the patients, and held every scrap of information as tightly as a Kremlin bookkeeper. No way would she share his role with an outsider like Janet.

But Hemlock was providing Kevorkian with a useful link to potential patients. Nearly every day, Janet, whose home phone number was published in Hemlock bulletins, would get calls from people all over the country who wanted to die and believed she could put them in touch with Dr. Death.

She spent hours and hours urging to them. Some, she realized, were merely depressed or lonely. Some went on the other side of assay. She was frightened when one young man, pregnant, the man his in a suicide pool. His mother was suffering heavily.

In 1994, Kevorkian promised a judge he would stop assisting suicides until the question of their legality could be officially resolved. During that time, the doctor decided he would turn his efforts to forcing a statewide referendum on physician-assisted suicide. It meant gathering 200,000 signatures in six months. "That won't be hard. I can do that myself if I have to," chirped Kevorkian, a political innocent who had never even registered to vote. Janet, a veteran of many electoral struggles, knew better. "You need a professional campaign. It's going to cost money, and you are going to have to hire someone to run it."

But Margo had died, and, under her sensitive cover, the signature campaign fell far short of what was needed. A few months later, Margo died of a heart attack.

Janet began to take on more responsibility a few months after that, when Kevorkian helped Margaret Gersha die in her suburban home. Two days earlier, Michigan's hastily enacted temporary ban on suicide assistance, thrown together by the state legislature in a futile effort to stop Kevorkian, had

expired. Lawmakers didn't know what to do. They didn't want to make the state a suicide state, but surely should that the public overwhelmingly backed Kevorkian.

They also feared that any law they passed might be useless. In April 1994, Kevorkian had gone on and in Detroit for violating the old suicide statute. The case was that of a young man with Lou Gehrig's disease, a malady that, experts testified, would probably have caused him to choke to death on his saliva. Kevorkian had all but forced the prosecutor's hand by announcing the suicide to the press.

The jury said not guilty. "I believe he broke the law, but

Heck takes a walk. "He took a walk in the park." "He was at the park."



he did it to relieve that boy's terrible suffering," one juror said, tears streaming. Lawmakers were stunned. Suddenly the Michigan Supreme Court issued a surprise ruling: that assisting suicide was and always had been illegal under ancient, unwritten common law. Legal scholars were not impressed. Nor was Kevorkian.

"The corruption is monumental," the always-judicious doctor blasted the judges. "Worse than the Nazis." He and Janet continued their work, seemingly determined to rile the authorities. They left the corpse of another young man in the back of the famous VW van parked in the lot used by the medical examiner, a cherry, attached, Motorcriste named Lyle's Dragovis, whom Pipher calls "the Transylvanian vampire."

In June 1995, Kevorkian started a victim hardware store, called it a drive, and, as a result, helped in his and only parent, Ernie Corbellino, a sixty-year-old from (continued on page 10)

"She's a lot brighter than you'd think," Kevorkian says of Janet. "Thanks a lot," she fires back. "So are you."

shop calls T-shirts with a leering Dr. K. holding a syringe under the legend he HAS THE SOLUTION.)

Finally, on June 4, 1995, with no slots available in any city, history was made in Michigan's bustling city of Yellow-green, sitting in a suburban park. With his sisters, Helen Holzhauer—the wife of a German diplomat—and Margo Janet, on hand as witnesses, the first Janet, Janet Adams, lay back as Kevorkian inserted an intravenous tube into her vein. That started a flow of harmless saline solution into her veins. Then, without hesitation, Adams flipped the switch on the suicide machine. "Have a nice trip," the world's first self-proclaimed "volunteer" told her.

"Thank you, thank you," she murmured. A solution of anesthetic rushed into her system, sending her into unconsciousness. The last she started a timer, sixty seconds later, a third solution started, slowly poisoning chemicals, designed to stop her heart. She rose up in it to lean him, he says, before falling back and into a coma, in which she spent the last six minutes of her life.

Janet Good knew it was going to happen but not where or when. The day the news broke, she was flown to New York to appear on the Today show, at the Michigan spokeswoman of Hemlock, she was the closest thing the doctors could get to the apostle of planned death himself. Hemlock leadership was none too pleased.

They were angry that the doctor was out to ruin the whole national advocacy campaign by his reckless behavior. Janet remembers "We had wanted so much for a doctor to come forward, and one finally did. You will find in the minutes of the board that [I said] unless Hemlock supported Dr. K, I would withdraw, and I would describe the Michigan chapter if they continued to attack him." Few doubted her ability to do either.

"She was a doctress woman—I saw that immediately," Humphrey says. "I knew immediately it would take a special person to navigate through the criticism and media machine after that first suicide—and she never put a foot wrong, in my estimation." Hemlock backed off. Naturally.

KEEPING UP WITH

The Stevedores

How to achieve
the perfect postmodern
marriage (complete with the occasional
stripper, hooker, and porn star). By Bill Zehme



London's "stevedores"
have not all had their
1980s "hooker" phase
yet, but they are
already in the
business of
making a fortune

PHOTOGRAPH BY ANDREW BAKER

IN THAT MOST FEROUS REALM OF MATHEMATICS, THE HUNCH ARE FLOW. The known variables are fewer each day, windbreak means less to purporters everywhere. Forgotten, unassisted, they flee, seeking bliss unobtainable. Desperate, gullible, they flock to false prophets who fish off faddish theorems (I ask you, Miss! Venus? Who actually mated on those cold, distant ones? Nobody I know!) Yet, amidst this facile thrash, there long ago arose one voice of reason, of tangible truth, of durable experience.

He was a renegade, yes, one whose methods shocked so as to awaken a numbbed, hapless populace. Easily dismissed, as are all fresh vociferances, he persisted. He opened his own marriage to public inspection, blossoming in tiny ripples, the kind that accrue and erode combatant love. "My wife," he would say, "won't let me do her." Or: "Everybody is getting some but me."

Beneath, he traced natural boundaries, often implementing naked lubrication in his work. Indeed, his laboratory would be populated by hollies and marbles and others whose every onlook knew an unmitigated violation. Never did he stray or even touch much, instead, he orbited all misconduct, broadcast it over airwaves regulated by our free-thinking government. With each formal case study, he demystified the basic human urges that have men toward alimony payments, as if to declare, "I will show you what you are wanting, for I am meeting it, too, and perhaps all that we are missing is desire and debt and much therapy. And also fun." He did this, and does so still, for you and, for me, for many million dollars a year. But, arguably, he does it mostly for love of work, without which he knows he is nothing.

Naturally, I speak of Stern, the man-in-the-moon, once the devoted Long Island husband, and perhaps the finest man I have ever encountered. Faithfully married to the same woman for 30 years, years, he has remarkable hair (long, dark, thick, lovely sheer). Also, he has a luminous complexion and three daughters (aged fourteen, ten, and four). Stern, whose disciples readily call Howard, stands out

side). Our assignment was set for early afternoon, when the restaurant is closed, three clear of Stern's cyphophanes, who might wish to have sex with him or shake his right hand! (A man cannot traffic in tubes, even unassisted, as he does, without stirring the issue of known untruths.) Here he was delivered by his loyal driver, Berene, the only man who can glimpse Stern in mediocrity, when he does, find him, in the backseat of his vehicle on route to and from Manhattan, where his microphone awaits and spends him each morning.

"Did you meditate?" asked the good wife Alison upon her husband's arrival on this day. (I had insisted upon her presence.) "Oh-huh," he replied, blushing her warmly, his arms curled around her syllable warm. Then he said to no one in particular, "I don't have any underwear on now." His retreat of apathy, protest as well, exchanged glances where marriage I could not discern. To his wife, he said brightly, "Hey, Alison, you're all dolled up!" And she said, "Buh, honey!" Two eyes later, the Sterns had had sexual intercourse, and I sensed their pheromonal acid hanging thick about them. (Moreover, buoyed by some heartfelt revelations I was to elicit during this session, two ensuing physical relations would ensue spontaneously.) Eying his woman appreciatively, Stern announced, "I gotta get her interviewed every day!"

What, then, of Alison Stern, aged forty-three (like Stern herself), postmodern housewife and mother, whose full-throated voice is sometimes heard during her husband's radio conversations, via telephone, instructing him to grow up and stop lying about what transpires in their bedroom? The question comes up occasionally. The answer is that she is very nice. Her laugh comes easily in conversation, when you say something with which she agrees, she will say, "Right," right. "Twice, like that. But this woman is no pushover, and that is why her marriage succeeds."

Her husband must exaggerate truth in order to relate to his troubled audience, as is truth personified, leading no girl and, at the same time, setting new standards in afflicting marital bewilderment. "Certainly, she's the boss, huh," asserts the beautiful screen Mary McCormack, who, as it happens, portrays Alison Stern onscreen in the current film release *Private Parts*, considered by many to be one man's love letter to his wife, his loving lubricator. "That was the way I played her," says McCormack. "I think she's totally in charge." (From his February 4 radio broadcast—Stern: "The only thing wrong with the film is Alison looks no more like a hero." Alison, pleading from home: "I am the hero.")

Without doubt, it is his home's good material made that has allowed Stern to become the influential figure he is today. Thus, I felt it would be illuminating to see the two of them alone together in relaxed surroundings, with hair-and-makeup people also in attendance, plus a photographer, the photographer's two assistants, and a small, bored magazine staff. Is this usual crucible, I would want the intimacy of their exemplary power dynamic. I would ask questions of bedrock politics, secret spins, and personal hair care. What emerged was an inspirational marriage, sometimes akin to the Howard and Alison Stern Marriage Manual, describable only as a glacially unimpaired to enduring love and great resignation. "It's true," Stern

would tell you. "The world is filled with suspicion, yet we are here and still together. Of course, it could fall apart tomorrow. It's not a done deal. She could throw me out any day now."

Limitations Are Limitless!

"DON'T TELL ME THAT IT'S EASY LIVING WITH ME," HE SAID next. She nodded, then elaborated. "It's not easy living with him." Her voice here no softer. It is a fundamental acceptance. No man is easy, nor is any woman, and once this can be acknowledged, wouldn't life beholding great advantage? By and by that possibility, Stern set out to create a marriage that would be unassailable for as open desire and sexual frustration. The rewards have been plentiful. In 1990, Hollywood called. Stern himself would star in the rule book and perform love scenes with a woman who was not his wife but played her, so intimacy was at last technically permissible. What could be more perfect? Moreover, his acerbic wife could only thrill to such glomeration, as would

Be Vain in Love!

AS WE EDGED, STERN SAT AT A TABLE WHERE MAKEUP MEN began applying to his guest coiffure. He is, after all, a man who likes to look good for his woman, a lesson in itself. "She's got natural beauty," he said of his wife. "But when you got a face like mine, you gotta be worried on. Makes a big difference." Convicted of his own ungraciousness, he prodded to obscure his God-given features with dark gloves and long hair, a masochist he prescribes for men similarly afflicted. It is, however, his wife that concerns him most. When I asked how his unworldly concerns are maintained, his wife rolled her adoring eyes and said, "Do you have all day?" (In part, much deep condensing is involved, as underscored by professional, followed by the rigorous and repeated oval of a curling iron.)

But this wangling made him a complete man. Indeed, were it not for his hair, there would be no Alison in his life, and this is why. Caught in the rain on his way to a party in 1974, young Stern, then a Boston University junior, perished



When death does them part, John's photo from *After America*, Howard pays his respects to a trigger. Anytime as Alison dutifully poses in his wet capes.

any civilian, and her gratitude manifested itself in new and surprising ways. For he insisted that it would be so.

"Ohhh, yes, let me tell you, there's gonna be some big changes around my house!" he declared for my benefit. "Even of all, she'll be shuddered to the bed every night. That's what movie stars do!"

Here once Alison brightened, adding, with only mutual irony. "I'll be greeting him with nothing on under my bathrobe."

"By the way, we'll also be joining Scientology," he continued. "Oh, yeah—me, Cruise, Travolta. As soon as you get into the stratosphere, you gotta be a Scientologist. It's a little confused, though. I think you have to pay to a test tube. Anyway," he concluded, "every married couple should have a movie made about them. It really helps!"

that his second move was being badly drenched. "I needed I needed a blow-dry," he would later significantly write in his memoirs. Finding himself in the neighborhood of an old female friend, he barged into her apartment in search of hot sex. On his way to the bathroom, he spied his future, sweetly loathing in the kitchen. "She was just my type—really cute, just the body."

The coed Alison Stern rebuffed Stern's awkward advances only slightly—and only after his hair was dry—and within days continued to appear in his underfilm program, in which she was seen meditating on a rock. (He wooed her with circles from the lamp.) On their subsequent first day, they saw the movie *Love*, the story of the reformed comic Larry Bruce, which, although they could not know then, foretold the tumultuous life that loomed before them. Then

"We'll also be joining Scientology," Stern said. "Me, Cruise, Travolta. As soon as you get into the stratosphere, you gotta be a Scientologist. I think you have to pay to a test tube."

For five and believes misanthropic needs marriage, his own especially. As he wrote in his first groundbreaking manifesto, *Private Parts*, now a major motion picture. "It's the greatest single source of sexual satisfaction I have." Because of his anxious schedule—he must wake before dawn to begin the daily rite of speaking aloud—he likes to perform self-gratification most nights as a means to induce sleep.

Stern had not yet indulged himself on the day of our long-anticipated first meeting. He wore his hair in a bun and hair down on his shoulders. Gaining physical access to his person understandably required months of negotiation, endless telephone wrangling with postcoital, and finally the deconstruction of a secret microwave place, the Italian restaurant Vizio, in Brooklyn Heights, New York, located minutes from his home, whose hallowed bar unapologetic patrons are known only to associates and to Richard Stevenson (just welcome back after misbehavior with cucumbers at pool-

he got her drunk on Blue Nun wine, which got him to third base, which got them where they are today, more or less.

Marry Two People!

DIFFICULT IN MARRIAGE SINCERITY WITHOUT WARING, and on this day one storm sharply to the left while the other Sterns were exchanging ideas before me. To illustrate this paradigm of good partner dialogue, I will attempt to reassemble their intimate rhythm between (Note his deft tone of softening her urgency with well-disguised remarks. Men, try this at home!)

HER: I just came to an interesting revelation—
HIM: Just looking at me now?
HER: No, recently—that—
HIM: It's a kooky thing, huh?
HER:—That I've been married to him for almost twenty years.

HIM:—and she's sick of it.
HER:—but that's a third person in our marriage.
HIM: Who is that?
HER: The guy on the radio. I've got no problems with the guy sitting here in this magazine.

HIM: That's what you think. I just passed gas.
HER: But that third person I've not every about.
HER: Thus, the person one marries is not necessarily the person one ever knows absolutely. People change, they grow.

"I can't play the jealous wife anymore," said Alison. "I feel that I can trust him." Howard gently patted her forearm and added, "Isn't that what Mary Jo Buttafuoco said?"

they have large bearded strippers occasionally sit on their laps at the office. It is part of the wonder of life. Indeed, the public Stern and the private Stern are legitimately reputed to be quite different, although the physical resemblance is accuracy. But does this mean that one Stern is any less real than the other? Hardly. It is after all, the public Stern who pays for his wife's personal trainer? Robin Quivers, the bright woman who hosts Stern in his work, admits: "Yes, there are two Howard Sterns, one of the funniest things I've ever said to me: 'You have no idea who he is when he's on the air! He had come by to visit one day and couldn't recognize the man he saw.' It's one thing to hear him on the radio, but then to see him in life. She doesn't say that every day, she doesn't deal with that person she kept asking me, 'Who is that?'"

Of course, who among us is not two or more people, depending on our levels of psychosis? Still, it is understandable that Alison Stern would this long to acknowledge her second husband, the colorful one so lauded by C cups and sadomasochists, as willing to give voice to our universal self. Such professional acceptance does not come overnight. Some may think, however, that evidence was in place fifteen years ago, after she miscarried the fetus of their child, he worked through his grief over Washington, D.C., anxious by generalizing, "My stupid wife had to have a miscarriage! It's all her fault!" Unfortunately, it was the private Stern who thereafter had to sleep on the couch for days (Fountainberg). The exact he is wise enough to know that there is no mistake from which a marriage cannot ultimately benefit, he wastes

no time with unnecessary contrition: "Let me tell you something, Alison," I heard him lecture her. "It was a good thing I did that! It gave the most great domestic scene!" She quietly signaled her agreement with a firm shove to his rib cage.)

Spool Less Time Together!

HEALTHFUL MARRIAGE REQUIRES AMPLY BREATHING ROOM, and Stern makes every effort to honor his wife today. "I leave her alone for a couple of days and then she comes to appreciate the great man that I am." Deposition, he feels, only prolongs wedlock. As he told me, "The reason this loss is that we don't see each other at night." To wit: Due to the unforgiving demands of his profession, the Sterns have separate bedrooms, thus ensuring separate lifestyles. (Also, they keep separate dressing areas but share a bathroom. "We would separate bedrooms," she blurted to me. He shrugged. "They, the family, thus come together." According to him, the radio station is by night and does not stain her and down. "I love my night," she offered, perhaps a bit too enthusiastically. He said, "So far as I know, she could be doing anything." The him of his white noise machine breaks him inoffensive all traces of his merry ascribes but not his morning. "It's an issue for me," he told me later (Alison notes that she doesn't move). His solution: "I put a pillow over her mouth. No, I don't recommend that. You'll end up in jail. I just wake her up and say, 'Listen, honey, she's up! You're storing like a guy! I can't take it. I gotta sleep. You gotta leave the room.' Then we start whining at one another until somebody drifts off again."

They elect to meet only on Sunday nights. "Those are date nights," he explained. "I strip down to my bikini underwear and pose for her." Because he cannot leave his home for fear of mass abduction, their rendezvous are confined to his bathroom, but where most of his working hours are spent in cognitive research and watching TV (a one-handed-mech with AMX touch screen). "My daughter," he calls it proudly. "I sit there and control the universe." This private refuge, whose door is electronically fortified with two double locks, is also where he composed his two best-selling autobiographical texts and where he conducted experiments in Freudian psychology, the details of which appear in the Stern volume *Man America*. "I did it in order for the enlightenment of humanity," he told me as he fully looked on sleepily.

Understandably, the subject is a delicate one. He boasted at first of reaching repeated orgasms with his on-set partner ("cyberbabe," in his heightened parlance) but denied it to his wife. "Alison doesn't go for that kind of stuff," he said, turning to her. "Honey," he asked, "do you think it was cheating or not?" She said unreservedly, "Well, I don't believe that just [the cyberpartner] was true." He said, "Of course it wasn't, darling!" He then bowed out of her view and, nodding vigorously at me, silently mouthed the words "It was true! It was true!" He seemed very happy.

Accept His Other Women!

"I CAN'T PLAY THE JEALOUS WIFE ANYMORE," SHE SAID after conversion, along with his first husband, remained thereafter to the room. "I can't," she repeated, a little urgently. "I feel that I can trust him." Stern gently patted her forearm and added, "Isn't that what Mary Jo Buttafuoco said?" But his fidelity is, of course, a matter of record.



Become the Bard of Bourbon

Ever thought you could write as ad better than the pros? Now's your chance! Look at the Knob Creek ad on page 67—and do it one better.

Press the bottle label, pick a word just even part of a word that sums up what makes Knob Creek special to you and elaborate on it in 20 words or less. If your concept is chosen, we'll make you on this page in the August issue of *Esquire*. We'll also come to your house and host a Knob Creek party in your honor.

Send your submission, including your name, address, daytime telephone number and date of birth, to: Esquire Promotions, 9th Floor, 250 West 55th Street, New York, NY 10019, or fax to 212-361-0435. All entries must be received by June 1, 1997. Entries will be judged on originality, creativity, humor and relevance to Knob Creek. Decision by judges is final. Entries must be 20 words or older.

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Spring Suing at Alfam

This spring Alfam is launching their new line with an enhanced quality of fabric. The new wool plus lycra blend offers a luxurious, comfortable feel and allows more freedom of movement. Alfam's

expanded fabric will debut in April and can be found in suits, sport coats, and trousers. Suits carrying the line include Mary's, Benetton's, Jack's, Lazzari, Goldsmith, and The Don Martin.



STYLE AGENDA

A SPECIAL PROMOTION FOR ESQUIRE READERS

Spring Scentations

Cosce's fragrance is bold adventure with the sensuality of a classic fragrance for men. Today's Cosce still features the same sophisticated, masculine notes in a smoother, more seductive scent. Perhaps a journey of great exploration begins with this single scent.

What is a man? In this case, everything. Davidoff Cool Water captures the energy of the sea, the spirit of the wind, the pure refreshment of ocean air, and creates an exhilarating fragrance for men.

Just as a great man always finds right the scent of Mary Jo Buttafuoco is always stylish and smart. And like that blazer, Mary's clean, classic scent sets your style in work and play.



Joe Prep

Every man needs a classic look for spring that's perfect for dress-down days at the office and can move right into the weekend with real style. This plaid shirt from J.G. Hook is a cool blend of cotton blend in the answer to looking casual yet buttoned-up. It is particularly shiny when paired with plaid and collared blouses, another favorite from the J.G. Hook men's line.

To explore these real locations for J.G. Hook apparel and accessories for men, please call 212-744-1411.

Attention Web Surfers

We turn to check with the Northwestern Argline Web site at www.nwargline.com for the latest flights, special travel discounts, and more.

Check out the new Arch Calendars and find out why other celebrities are called megapop. Arch's Web site is at www.arch.com.

Columbia House has arrived on the Web! Just click on www.columbiainhouse.com to browse through thousands of selections, order or ask questions. Plus you can e-mail your thoughts.



Swinging the line 200th birthday in 1946, Robinson after he broke the color barrier in 1947. He was the National League's MVP.

NOW BATTING FOR BROOKLYN...

Fifty years after baseball's "great experiment,"
Jackie Robinson is still chasing the dream
By Mike Lupica

THERE SHOULD BE A SHRINE AT THIS CORNER OF BEDFORD AVENUE IN Brooklyn, but there is a housing project instead. Next to the manager's office, hidden by some shrubbery, there is the shape of a baseball, scars and all, carved in concrete, and these words underneath it: 1947 IS THE YEAR OF THE GREAT EXPERIMENT. Once, this place was everything in Brooklyn—the capital of the borough, one of the capitals of baseball. Once, this corner was one of the most famous and romantic corners of sports, because the Dodgers played here. Because Jack Roosevelt Robinson stepped onto a ball field here in the spring of 1947 and played a game of baseball.

Now there is just a name on the apartment building and a baseball next to the manager's office and the American flag flying overhead, the way it once did over Robinson and all of baseball. Fifty years later, it does not seem like enough, except that now John Mickens came walking up Bedford Avenue from Empire Boulevard in Brooklyn, walking slowly against a cold, hard morning wind.

Some kids passed the old man by, not noticing him, most of them black, many of them from the Ebbers Field Apartments, wearing their oversize parkas and Nike wool caps. They had only heard about the little ballpark that once stood here, the history that was made here. But they all knew the name Jackie Robinson.

And John Mickens, seventy-seven, who learned to walk out of the past on this morning, brought Robinson with him and the whole grand spring of 1947 as well.

Now Ebbers Field was back on Bedford Avenue. Mickens, a proud Robinson fan, a proud black man from the Class of '42 did that. "I wasn't there the very first day, but I

where he will be surrounded by his grandfather, many of which he will attend with his mother and his grandmother, whom he refers to as "my second mother." The young man says he is ready for all of it.

"I know I have a responsibility to the Robinson family that I will carry with me the rest of my life," Jose Suarez says. "I know I'm going to be more in public from now on."

Jackie Robinson's grandson smiles.

"I'll try to make him proud," he says.

At Oriole, his football coach, turns to him. "Oh, I believe you already have."

THERE HAVE BEEN OTHER BLACK ATHLETES WHO made a difference. Joe Louis did in the boxing, and Muhammad Ali and Arthur Ashe helped redefine America in the sports. And more than twenty years

after Jackie Robinson broke the color line in baseball, Curt Flood challenged the sport's reserve clause and became the true father of free agency. Flood said baseball and sacrificed his own career in the process and is one of the few who could ever be discussed in Robinson's weight class. Robinson is always remembered differently, though. There was always this question later: What if he had failed? But, of course, he did not.

Before long, it wasn't just Jackie Robinson who was something to see at Ebbets Field, it was Willie Mays at the Polo Grounds, and then Henry Aaron in Milwaukee. It took too long in baseball, and Robinson did not live long enough to see it, but there would be black managers and black general managers, and black coaches in football and basketball. Not enough, not far enough. But change finally came to sports in the country.

Jackie Robinson played ten years in the major leagues, batted .311 for his career, appeared in six World Series, led the league twice in steals, stole home nineteen times (and stole out in the 1955 Series), and was named National League Most Valuable Player in 1949 after hitting .341 and knocking in 124 runs. He played with flash and swagger and made it easy to see. People still talk about how in the 1947 World Series, Yogi Berra—a kid himself then—was taken out from behind the plate because when Robinson was doing on the base paths was driving Berra out of his mind. It wasn't just coaches, he tormented pitchers and scared the daylight out of anybody who had to stand in at second base when he was stealing or trying to break up a double play. Baseball did not look the same after Jackie Robinson.

It was no much more than the color of his skin. Jackie Robinson was elected to the Hall of Fame in 1962 and died ten years later. He testified for Curt Flood, spoke out in the summer against Muhammad Ali's refusal to be drafted.

He was complicated and completely himself until the end. And now, fifty years later, he has finally made it onto a Wheaties box and will be the central figure of this baseball season.

"What they will talk about all year," says Frank Michelson, "is what my father has been telling me about Jackie Robinson my whole life." John Michelson took his son, born in 1940, to his first Dodger game in the early 1950s. Before long, they were making the trip by subway to see Mays go against Robinson at the Polo Grounds. And even after Ebbets Field had been leveled by a wrecking ball, it happened that John Michelson moved his family to the apartment that was built on the site. "He was proud of the address," Frank Michelson says.

If you walk down behind the Ebbets Field Apartments toward Prospect Park, you come to Sullivan Place, and there to the right is Jackie Robinson Middle School. From the outside, it is a run-down building to what has become a run-down neighborhood.

And on the side of a wall facing Empire Boulevard is a mural of Robinson. The back drop is bright yellow, so you can see it from blocks away. There are three drawings of the most famous Brooklyn Dodger of them all. One is at his face, another has him in a fielding position. The third shows Robinson in his batting follow-through, wearing number six forever.

Underneath it is a drawing of the Hall of Fame plaque that hangs in the National Baseball Hall of Fame in Cooperstown, New York. Above the plaque are three words: FREED. LEADER. FATHER. ATHLETE. HUMANITARIAN. BUSINESSMAN.

And finally, that POWER. One of the teachers at Jackie Robinson Jr. comes out the door as I stand in front of the mural. She smiles when asked her name.

and says, "Let's just have the only name be Mr. Robinson's." I ask if the students at this school know why the school was named after Mr. Robinson.

"They are told as soon as they get here," she says. "They are told that a school named after a baseball player now stands in what was once a parking lot for the ballpark here. They are told why Mr. Robinson was important. What they do with that knowledge is up to them."

She smiles again and says, "And from what I know, that is exactly the way he would want it."

I had been directed to the school, and the mural, by John Michelson. He had pointed to the discussion of Sullivan Place the way he had pointed to right field and left and the place on Bedford Avenue where Duke Snider, the Duke of Flatbush, used to hit home runs into the street.

On this morning (fifty years later, Michelson could see Robinson and those first April afternoons so clearly, the way he could see the people gazing off the buses, standing near Prospect Park, turning the little ballpark that once stood here into the street existing baseball place in the world).

John Michelson said he did not have to walk down to the school mural to see an image of Jackie Robinson. He just pointed to his head.

"I got it all now," the old man said. "I got Jackie Robinson right up here." ■



The headline: Jose Suarez (above with his mother and grandfather, Jackie Robinson) will follow his grandfather in MLB.

How to use your head to grow back your hair.

Clinical research proves it: Dr. Lewenberg's Formula regrows more hair faster. Results in just 3 months.

It's just common sense. Look at the facts and it's easy to see why you should try **Dr. LEWENBERG'S FORMULA** now. It's the first treatment medically proven to regrow normal hair. Plus, it's far less expensive than surgical or non-medical alternatives and far more effective than using plans, old-fashioned minoxidil alone.

The Formula
Dr. LEWENBERG'S FORMULA is a unique mixture of minoxidil and tretinoin (Retin-A) blended on a safe, easy-to-apply hair spray. It's far more effective than minoxidil alone because tretinoin rejuvenates your skin, improving absorption, helping to reverse even frontal baldness. And, as anti-DH testosterone action encourages growth of stronger hair and improves the quality of

your existing hair which makes maintenance easier and less expensive.

The Proof
Nearly 90% of patients who apply **Dr. LEWENBERG'S FORMULA** show "visible—and even cosmetically significant—improvement in hair quality" after just three months with over 85% of patients starting to grow normal hair within that period. That's the major finding of an article published in the highly respected medical journal **Advances in Therapy** ("Oct. '96).

The article also reported:
♦ 91% of patients—men and women—who used the formula for 1½ to 2 years grew "beautiful, normal hair" or showed "marked hair growth" improvement.

♦ Patients who tried other treatments but failed to grow hair, began regrowing their own normal hair within months of switching to **Dr. LEWENBERG'S FORMULA**.

The Man
Dr. Adam Lewenberg is a highly trained and experienced physician who has successfully treated thousands of patients—men and women—for hair loss problems. He was one of the early pioneers to use minoxidil as the fight against baldness, but

noted that results were most often disappointing. That's what led to his work to find a more effective treatment—and to **Dr. LEWENBERG'S FORMULA**.

It's Your Call
If your hair is thinning, you can turn the tide quickly—in just three months. Call **Dr. Lewenberg** now for a free telephone consultation.



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CITIZEN BILLY BOB

Billy Bob Thornton done went and made the brashest, most down-home film to hit Hollywood in years. It may even be a classic. Is this proud hillbilly the next Orson Welles?

By Mark Jacobson

LIKE BILLY BOB THORNTON SAYS, HE AND the president of the United States aren't "what you'd call asshole buddies," but the two, both Arkansas small town boys made good, have run into each other several times over the years, "just around home." So it wasn't out of line for Billy Bob to ring up his friend Harry Thompson on the car phone to find out if Clinton had seen *Sing Bitch*, the picture Billy Bob wrote, directed, and stars in (The same picture for which he would earn two Oscar nominations: Best Actor and Best Adapted Screenplay).

After all, Billy Bob (not William Robert—but daddy was Billy Ray), from Malvern, Arkansas, north of Dalar, east of Caddo Gap and Unquap, had consensused with the former occupant of the Little Rock statehouse only days before. Mike Nichols offered him the James Garville role in *Primary Colors*, and Billy Bob wasn't about to say yes on that particular one without first checking with the Big Bubba, who, when contacted, said, Ah, shh, Billy Bob, what the hell, can't turn down an opportunity like that.

"President's said," says Thompson, key razorback-White House media link and producer of *Heaven Alone*, the TV series for which Billy Bob got his first decent Hollywood paycheck. "You know, with the inaugural and that." Billy Bob leans his lip, squints his doggy brown eyes as the car whizzes up the steep grade of Laurel Canyon Freeway. "Harry! Look, about *Sing Bitch*! Don't bring it on to him, all right? Say it's a car below the worst Don Knotts movie okay? Harry? Shh... phone's coming out."

Billy Bob yells for Thompson once more, then starts at the phone with a sudden, beliefful glaze of redneck menace. It's personal now, between him and the cellular. A man of marked Lucifine tendencies, Billy Bob goes twenty around certain everyday modern conveniences. His screenplay quote is through the roof, but he either can't or won't learn how to type, he writes everything out by hand. He won't fly. "I'm not going down with a bunch of screaming tourists," he says. When *Sing Bitch* played the New York Film Festival (to a standing ovation), Billy Bob got the film's distributor, Miramax, to drive him across the country in a limousine. That was a typically conflicted look for Billy Bob, prancing through the Arkansas hills, where he'd grown up as a back-toothed, black-rimmed-glasses-wearing freak whose main claim to fame was weighing thirty pounds at seven months, thereby becoming the biggest baby in country history.

Phobias and complexes: Billy Bob, a complex guy in full of them. His friend and mentor Robert DeNiro calls him the hillbilly Orson Welles, but maybe the Ozark Woody Allen is more like it, being in so many things set him off. Antisepic furniture makes him ill. "I see one of those chairs and get sick to my stomach," Billy Bob reports. "I've learned not to sit around the mall."

Well, it's not too shabby, riding through Laurel Canyon, talking about when the chief executive is going to look at your movie. Not too shabby at all. Forty-one and going bald in kind of old and bushed up to be Woodstock's flavor of the month, but Billy Bob's smack there in the pocket, on the streak of a lifetime. Hitherto a classically anonymous, if



Interview by LANCE: "This is Hollywood when the doghouse is out," says Billy Bob.

moderately successful, Hollywood fringe worker on both the writing and acting front (excepts said, not made, below-the-rim parts here and there). Billy Bob shot *Sling Blade* for a big million provided by the Showmen Gallery, a small-movie finance company. Having made the film in twenty-four days down in Arkansas during the last spring of 1999, Billy Bob figured he'd created an excellent candidate for the small-but-admirable regional-movie-festive he is at Blockbuster. Movies there. Movies, under the subsidizing canopy of its far-flung Thelberg, Harvey Weinstein, bought the picture at auction, offering a highly prescriptive two million, a price that blew several miles in the independent-film community. Auloid if that was a somewhat larger sum than he envisioned getting for the film, Billy Bob swallows and says, "Yeah."

Since then, the commodification process has advanced again. After all, Miramax (producer of *Pulp Fiction* and superhit after being bought by Disney) is a company that knows a thing or two about building a poster, personality cult, a program made easier if the actor-director in question happens to have a catchy, instantly identifiable moniker like Billy Bob (works like Karen or Liberace), looks like Wyatt Jennings, and doesn't need Harvey Weinstein to tap him to all of the above. Hilbilly Owen Welles, heck, why not go for *chickens/fred Jones/Tammy's*?

IT'S LATE JANUARY HERE IN L.A., Oscar-nominees season, and Billy Bob Thornton—he of the *Seven* Records guitar epic, *monty boots* ("better than wearing one of them cute animals you got to hear a lot of shit about"), and the many carous commencing his former wares (thru) to headlong into preening his slightly shuffling self to the members of the Academy. On radio phone-ins and TV talk shows alike, entertainment reporters are hearing Billy Bob's soft drawl as chattering through the tags of his early days back at his grandfather's house in Alpine, Arkansas (no indoor plumbing, no electricity at night, where his grandfather, "a particular Christian," was a forest ranger who trapped most of the family food—potatoes, deer meat, and such. It's working pretty fine, you just the other day, Billy Bob managed to keep a straight face as the morning-show anchor or boomed, "Hollywood's all about Billy Bob Thornton")

Picking about to ought to be. Because *Sling Blade*, the most interesting film made in the U.S. since *Crash*, is a major work of late-twentieth-century American art. It might even be a great movie, like Robert Rossen's *Days of Glory* or *First* (which it resembles in pace, even though Billy Bob, no subtle reader, has chosen never to have heard of the French director). Infused with a claustrophobic sense of place that rivals that of Scorsese's *Little Italy* in *Mean Streets*, *Sling Blade* is part southern-Gothic, workday, part progressive-melancholy and religious. As he did with *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*, the aptly entitled low-budget sensation written with

longtime partner Tison Torreson and directed by Carl Franklin, Billy Bob allies himself with southern and midwestern post-Matthew "Iowa redneck" like his pals Dwight Yoakam and Vic Chesnutt (both of whom appear in *Sling Blade*), Steve Earle, and others—the generation of rednecks to come of age after the Civil Rights Act, where tractarian commentaries on the setting, apocryphal depictions of racism, and the Lord, Our Savior, have proved quite culturally resonant. It's all part of why *Sling Blade* at the boxoffice, most notably engendering soul-burgen one-man shows to hit Hollywood next July.

Mosely, it comes closer to Karl Childers, the first-toughed serial parent Billy Bob plays in *Sling Blade*. "I first saw Karl staring back at me from the mirror one awful day while sitting in a movie matinee, trying to remember equal how I never wanted to say 'I looked at him, he looked at me, and I said, 'You I guess Karl always been there, waiting for me.' First acquainting himself with the character in a stage monologue, and later in a short film," Billy Bob had pretty much come to realize the looking, black-staring Karl by the time he got to make *Sling Blade*, which begins on the day Childers is released from the "cervical hospital" to return to his hometown, where twenty-five years before, as a shunned twelve-year-old kid rounded by consigned to a shed behind the house, he'd killed his mother and her boyfriend with a farm tool "some folks call a *Sling Blade*."

Jim Chesnut would have appreciated the terrified body language Billy Bob infuses on Karl. With his half-shaved head, goose-necked a lock on in front of his chest, and an underbite approximating a mannequin's frozen smile, Karl's one good 'ol boy act to quicken the pulse around the all-night fish fry that it's the way he talks—the dry rattle of a box of rascals—the scrape of vocal cords scored by chemical weapons—the playback of a cassette found buried in an ancient tomb—that really gets you. He says, "Coffee makes me a little nervous when I drink it," and this clatters. Impair-like thing is something up your spine.

There's a lot to like about *Sling Blade*. Robert Altman never turned out an ensemble like this. Singer Dwight Yoakam (baritone) roles as the bad redneck boyfriend, and John Ratter (guy) is a remarkably true-to-life small-town, semi-dissected homosexual, but it's performance like the one turned in by first-time actor Rick Dal, Billy Bob's friend from down home, that give the picture its endearing verisimilitude. Still, you worry as Karl gets a job, befriends a young boy and begins to affect the compromised lives of the townspeople. You've seen *Seven Days*, you've seen *Being There*, you've even seen Harvey's *Kopie House*, so you fear Billy Bob's maternalized need is going to turn out to be just another run-of-the-mill folk holocaust. E.T. Saddy bar who someone grasps a great truth that totally eludes the so-called normal people.

Because Billy Bob is too close to Karl to steer his disaffected character into the over-the-top soap-sung of a

conventional sentimentalism. You watch Karl slung just tombeloned buildings with teeth thrown up onto their roofs and understand you're seeing a white-rimmed version of Frankenstein, with all the mystic (dare we say modernist?) terror and redemptive possibility of the great Shelley/Karl, half-chauvinist sentiment, Hansel and Gracie by name, *Sling Blade* reveals the stunted world of only Corinne McCarthy. Two thirds of the way in, you're weeping uncontrollably at the understated truth of it all.

Even if Tom Hanks (Gump), Dustin Hoffman (Rain Man), and Cliff Robertson (Shrek) got Best Actor awards for playing "lumped-over nerds" (Dwight Yoakam's depiction of Karl, Billy Bob, while flaccid—almost, really—by his current celebrity, refuses he doesn't seem much for so working Oates. His reminiscence from the Screen Actors Guild "my peers," he says, almost meeting up) is reward enough. Besides, there's that rumor about Sylvester Stallone "doing" Karl in some weird L.A. restaurant, retreating Karl's overacting agonies as the "All right, then" and "I realize," as if Rambo himself were fresh from the cervical hospital.

"Sly doing Karl," marvels Billy Bob, who will almost never do Karl himself, even if you beg. Legal to his down-trodden character-actor identity (Harry Dean Stanton, Power Bottom, and Sam Elliott were at his Super Bowl party), he recalls, not without fondness, "dragging myself to a zoo as a cowering kill guy over in the valley, and my whole part is a mid-neck psycho puppet girl's head into spinning Cucumber. Shit, I was in Chappa Chaka in Tennessee. One thing character

actors like, though, is sitting around stupid stars John Wayne or Nicholson, who ever it's something to do. I put the name and deal with not being stars, so Sly doing Karl—that's a trip."

LET ME SAY THIS ABOUT Billy Bob Thornton. No one else, out of the blue, ever bought me a copy of Captain Beckett's for Owen for Owen ("Can" make it through without that). Billy Bob says, leaping down his credit card. A drummer in southern rock bands during the seventies (one, Tim Hovenden, opened for Hank Williams Jr.) and as Riff vocalist (he purports to have sung long in an otherwise all-black band), Billy Bob can't get over the fact that Beckett and fellow surrealist Frank Zappa (another here) both came from Louisiana, a small desert here seventy-five miles east of L.A. It's nowhere as engrossed to hear that Joseph Losey and Nicholas Ray, two great directors,

were born two years apart in the even smaller La Crosse, Wisconsin. Then again, Billy Bob has never been one for the cult of the director. Crying Elton and Charles Dickens as his own situation, he shows immense inspiration from nature (the *Alman Brothers*). As *Alman* (he is a typeface all come) and novels (he's not for John Ford, "William's former brother"). Directing is "the most overrated part of movies," says Billy Bob, who had to be talked into the job on *Sling Blade*. "It was self-defense, to protect the picture against some unknown manipulation," he says with his usual mischievous grin, comparing most famous Hollywood directors to quarterbacks on small-town high school football teams. "It's not worth trying for, because you know some rich guy's son is going to get it, and throwing don't have that much to do with it." A recent enemy of the so-called proprietary cult ("A writer thinks of the idea, does all these drafts, the actors and the tech people kill themselves, then they bring in some mediocre management at the end, and it's a film by Joe Schermer"), Billy Bob says he put his own "directed by" between "the music and costume guys" to prove a point. If the Directors Guild has a problem with that, the cinema adds, "they can sue my ass."

"I'm no Hollywood rebel, but the place sucks," Billy Bob elaborates as he sits on the chilly outside porch of the Thornton Roadhouse on Sunset, lighting up one of the "no cut" cigarettes he knows will kill him (he says he did his daddy "People just don't get it. We worked our hearts out making *One Flew Over*, did everything for free, tried to make it good. Then it comes out, and a week or so later these agents are calling, saying, 'Great movie.' I'd just want to remake *One Flew Over* with stars? I had no option but to screen back, 'You fucking idiot! Do you have any idea what an insult that is? The guy said he wouldn't figure out why I was so upset.'"

AS WITH RAY, YOU LIKE the way Billy Bob talks. The stories are, best, Southern, great preening than anything, they've got the ring of truth, even if they seem to be, as Elton once said, "struck some." Don't interrupt and you might hear how Billy Bob's mother, a psychic, gave readings for money in the family living room. One day, Klarmann came to the Thornton house. They said Billy Bob's mother was "a witch" and her "underworld" ways were not about to be educated. "I was about thirteen. They were running around with this orange-haired boy and,



Karl makes Thornton's Billy Bob character Karl Childers a little less black in *Sling Blade* (top left) than in his work as a real-life character, who does a "Bright" film.

The Male Animal

TO YOUR HEALTH: How to stay fit, sane, and on top of your game

Edited by Anita Leclerc

SUPPORT SYSTEMS

The Air Chair

IT SHOWS, AN EYE ANGLER MAY SAY IT, more like an X-ray of a chair than a chair itself. But for the foreseeable future, Herman Miller's Aeron chair sits atop the list as the ultimate spine-co-expressor, ergonomically correct office chair. The company hit design gold by tossing out the idea of a chair—a foam-filled leather—or fabric-covered thing that you sit on—and replacing it with something else. Say, a mesh suspension device that lightly cradles the body in what feels like a zero-gravity embrace. And, best of all, we best reveal The Aeron Miller team found that the standard application of truncated teardrop to conventional chair seat results in a localized 7 degree increase in skin temperature. That causes sweating and blotching; the other's excessive attempt to aerate himself. Not only does the Aeron provide a smooth ride of radiated duration, but the controls that adjust the chair's seat height, seat tilt, armrest position (both vertical and lateral), and lumbar support give your fragile lower back the customized, quasi-medical attention it seems to thrive on. The chair looks good, too: high-tech and serene, is to see, but also, in the sparest face of the seat back, a touch Victorian—a memory of hunkered-down chairs of yore. —JENNIFER BROWNE

The best chair you butt without strain. It costs \$7,100/through Herman Miller, 800-445-4488.



THE MALE MIND MICHAEL SEIDEL

Men Behaving Madly

THE OTHER SIDE, MY WIFE AND I were reviewing some of our second-grade daughter's school-work and came across a project titled "My family." Molly's assignment was to provide personal details about each member of our tribe and (ya doubt because she's taught by a woman) describe how each of her siblings and parents "feels." Molly finds her mom to be moody "happy but tired"—a penetrating insight, we both thought. How did the tiny streak characterize her dad's typical emotional state? "Good but mad." As I headed upstairs to find out just exactly what the little ingrate meant, I was talked by my wife's clothing. "She's certainly got you pegged," she said.

Why both of us guess. My wife, Winifred Colglister, is the author of *101 Men: How to Survive Male Sex Wars* (a very handy opinion, the defensive book on personality. And Molly has clearly internalized her mom's willingness to make grand generalizations about the inner lives of others. As for my moodiness, I'm told that in nineteenth-century terms, I'm what's known as a congenital choleric—a pretty good guy who's nonetheless grossly a fox of the time. This been being a plain old choleric, which a full-time grocer.

Unfortunately, we choleric of whatever degree are often misunderstood. Our inaccessibility is frequently

perceived as hostility and found as a harbinger of aggression. Choleric characteristics are considered undesirable in our society, which tends to repress any going regular guys, although in other societies, like Israel, the in-your-face disposition is encouraged. We're often scapegoated—we're the bad guys who mercifully bring a tedious meeting to a close with an impatient outburst or lose it in a long checkout line when the cashier is having a broken staff. But we also know that we're often secretly admired, because our grouches get results. History is full of unstable sorts, from Moses to Rosa Parks, who got fed up and became heroes.

As it happens, this is a particularly tricky time of year for those of us who tend to feel mad all the time, or even good but mad. Some of us are emerging from the winter doldrums known as seasonal affective disorder (SAD), the syndrome that makes hibernation in animals and in linked to the reduced sunlight of the fall and winter months. But because a hallmark of the choleric temperament is to stay unmovable, the vernal equinox at the end of March actually poses a special challenge. Between February and April the rapid increase in the intensity of light engenders rapid changes in mood, which for us can translate into a flaring temper. Like dayglo, but moody boys emerging from hibernation, we swing between

the lassitude and depression of the winter blues and the impulsive bursts of energy typical of springtime. A declining frequency of sexual intercourse over the past couple of months (along with testosterone, it drops to its lowest level in February) doubtless fuels our grouches as well (although our partners might see it the other way around).

The increasing part of all this is that, although women who suffer from SAD outnumber men by four to one, many more men than women are categorized by personality researchers as irritable. It isn't always true. In infancy and toddlerhood, boys and girls show the same rates of aggression, "noncompliance," and difficult temperament. But over the course of development, girls' temperamental difficulties decline while the grumpy boys remain as obstinate as ever—and in some cases become even more so. The change in behavior, experts say, is due partly to social influences. It's simply less acceptable for girls to act roughly than for boys. But women end up paying a price for their aggressive propensity. By adolescence and into adulthood, they exhibit far greater rates of what psychiatrists call internalizing problems—in lay language, anxiety and depression.

My eight-year-old is more mightful than she knows. There really is something good about feeling mad.

ACCESSORIES

Sound Bites

THEY'RE ABOUT AS IN SAN SECTORS THERE BUT, BY THE BYE THE word lists come the apertures and the apertures, the apertures, the apertures, and the apertures—all the merest words that's packed into Borden's. Now a generation of digital synthesizers is here to capture much short takes, brilliant and brutal alike. Fitting the pulse like a party pillow, a digital voice recorder records on a clip, not a tape or disc. With as moving parts, it literally turns your voice into a sound bite, or a couple of bites, mapping up your thoughts like a little camera.

True tapes can be edgy and angular, like Yusef's restless moods, or slow and smooth, like Sam's metallic river rocks, or dark and deep, like Olympia's black eyes. But you're caught in traffic, mind wandering. This might burst out a barely remember—"Pick up three-eight-six with vinyl grooves at Radio Shack"—or a smoldering thought like—was it Tom Waite who said it?—"I'd rather have a bottle in front of me than a frontal lobectomy." Or, stalled in the subway by a



They take the words right out of your mouth. Olympia Records the 300, with thirty seconds of reusable digital memory. \$49. Sony ICD-50, with sixteen minutes. \$100. Pico VY 300, with five minutes. \$30.

track live up ahead, you have a voice, like that entire poem of Ezra Pound's, "In a Station of the Metro." The apparatus of those lines is the crowd; it's Pico on a wet, black bench. —PRA PETER



willen is superoxide—a highly reactive chemical produced by immune cells that accumulates around hair follicles. Superoxide throws the “shed” switch.

Even healthy follicles release their hair about every four years, but balding men shed more often. Their follicles, when DHT attaches to them, may create a protein that is not recognized by the body. The immune system then sends in the cavalry, triggering the release of more superoxide. “It’s like when a transplanted organ is rejected,” says Proctor. It’s bad enough that superoxide throws every shed switch in sight, but it seems to react with nitric oxide to form toxic chemicals that irritate the follicles the way a strong bleach burns the skin.

Under this onslaught, a balding man’s follicles shrink and scum until the growth cycle is reduced from four years to a pathetic four months. To add to the outrage, their shrunken size makes for fine and weakened hair, baby hair that can never camouflage a shiny part.

According to Dr. Ken Wachtel, director of dermatopharmacology at NYU Medical Center, such a process may not be reversible. “I am much more optimistic,” he says, “that we can stop hair loss before it happens.” The moral is that hair-loss treatment should begin before hair loss appears. Men seeking to hold their hairline are now turning to three main drugs.

MINOXIDIL

The now ubiquitous minoxidil was first approved in 1993 as a blood-pressure medication. Unfortunately for women, who preferred their faces hairless, it made some people sprout hair everywhere. When topical application showed localized hair growth, the drug was rolled back into the lab and rolled out ten years later as Rogaine. Absorbed through the skin, minoxidil probably mimics NO, throwing the follicles’ grow switches. In trials, it promoted moderate regrowth on only 39 percent of the men who used it for a year. But because it remains the only FDA-approved hair-loss drug, it’s the backbone of the balding man’s luxury Procter-and-Kellogg’s hair-loss line. Wachtel says it’s the best bet for slowing the loss of existing hair.



PROPECIA

The next treatment to gain its way through the FDA-approved machinery probably when the year will be Mox’s promising finasteride sibling, Propecia. Finasteride inhibits the enzyme that turns testosterone into DHT—the first domino in the chain reaction that ends in follicle death. It first appeared in the guise of Proscar, a drug that combats prostate enlargement, another problem caused by DHT. Mox’s trial results have raised high hopes for Propecia’s effectiveness. More than half of those treated had “clinically significant increases in growth of new

hair.” Some holdouts, wanting to get the jump on the approval process, are already cadging prescriptions for Proscar from their physicians.

TRICOREN

Developed at ProCys in Skunkland, Washington, Tricore is a prescription to come out in the next year, too, not as a drug but as an additive in shampoo and conditioners. Early trials of a Tricore topical solution resulted in an percent denser hair growth in 16 percent of participants, but to approval by the FDA could be years away. The copper-peptide compound may neutralize the superoxide that makes follicles shed. Minoxidil’s hair-balding men already dither as another of ProCys’s copper-peptide compounds, known as over-the-counter

gel originally developed to help heal wounds.

AS THESE NEW drugs head toward FDA approval, experience has already shown that they often work best in combination,

each combating a different facet of the balding process. While finasteride, for example, prevents further DHT damage to follicles, minoxidil coaxes those already weakened into growing good hair again. Thus, some prescribers combine minoxidil and Proscar together. Other physicians treat propylthiouracil, a prescription of thyroid disease, to suppress the hair loss. Proscar’s laboratory produces Propecia, a prescription of thyroid disease, to suppress the hair loss. Proscar’s laboratory produces Propecia, a prescription of thyroid disease, to suppress the hair loss.

Before you pour your doctor for prescriptions, however, beware the risks of using drugs “off-label”—for purposes other than those they were approved



How to Let It Go Gently

WE MAY HAVE IT ALL IN ENGLAND, BUT IN AMERICAN MENSHIPS starting to lose it!

“Did you see him at *A Time to Kill*?” asks Len, who cuts men’s hair at Pierre Michel in New York. “Matthew is going to lose his hair so fast . . . the poor thing.”

Len, who has trimmed the likes of Paul Newman, Harrison Ford, and Liam Neeson, as well as countless men for England’s fashion shows, says it’s easy to spot the first signs of trouble up top: Your widow’s peak starts to go, or your hair becomes a subtle shade lighter and thinner. Here are four strategies the experts to help you cope with loss.

THINK ABOUT PAINTING WARTS. If you’ve always worn your hair straight back, consider parting it or, if you part it already, try moving the part to the other side. “The way you’ve worn your hair is just not going to work anymore,” Len says. By changing the way your hair lies, you’ll be able to push it slightly forward and make it look thicker.

NO SHAGGING ALLOWED. When men think they’re losing their hair, they panic and go to it big. “But that’s the worst thing you can do,” Len says. She recommends a shorter cut, one that won’t weigh your hair down. “It’ll look better, as quarters.”

But be warned. “Women love long hair on men and always want their men’s hair longer,” she says. Consider a wiggle talk before you take it off. Len recalls that for one client an upstroke cut almost led to a divorce. “I’m not kidding,” she says.

USE, BUT DON’T ABUSE. Oils and ointments work fine for thickening your hair, but be sure to apply your hair with a towel before applying them. “If you do it,” she cautions, “you’ll get that shiny hair look. It’s not attractive.”

DON’T BE AFRAID TO DYE. “We’re not talking peroxide,” she stresses. “We’re talking vegetable dyes.” Using one that matches your hair color is a sure way of adding help to hair; the dye binds to each strand, giving you a fuller look. Men use a little gray at first, she says, but “once they dye it, they love it.”

With the daunting skin treatment Retin-A, which seems to assist absorption. He claims that his combination grows new hair in 30 percent of patients.

Before you pour your doctor for prescriptions, however, beware the risks of using drugs “off-label”—for purposes other than those they were approved

For Proscar, for example, was developed for use in older men, so long-term safety in younger men has not been established. So far now, you might want to stick to Rogaine.

Or you could join the likes of Michael Jordan and Patrick Stewart and be cool with your heritage.

—COLIN BRADY

TREATMENTS

New Strategies to Save Your Scalp

Rule No. 1: Don't wait till it's too late.

WITH AT LEAST forty treatments for baldness patented in 1995 and \$200 million budgeted for clinical trials in 1996, you'd think someone might have figured out by now why men lose hair. But the lab guys know only one big thing: Hair follicles shrink

and die. They've proved that this tragedy is triggered by the body's especially potent testosterone derivative, DHT. But researchers can and only theorize about why the perfectly normal presence of DHT leaves some otherwise healthy men mourning their hair as it washes down the drain.

According to Houston researcher Dr. Peter Proctor, DHT fuels up the “grow hair” and “shed hair” mechanisms in follicle cells. The good guys, Proctor postulates, are nitric oxide (NO) molecules that are secreted from nearby blood-vessel walls. They trip the cellular “grow hair” switch. This

The Hair Net

Hair-challenged guys now chatter via the Internet about dosages, doses, and treatments. At the Internet men's group, members post a hundred or more messages a day, sometimes making cryptic arrangements to meet. Proscar prescriptions for one another. But in its most high-minded moments, the group provides a forum where balding researchers mix like gurus among the masses and hair-loss anxiety melts like, well, a balding man's hairline.



TRYOUT

All Thumbs on Deck

THE HIGH-PERFORMANCE sailboat hobby is the past, its rigging a cat's cradle of ropes, sails and guy wires. Scudding clouds race above a chafky, blue-green sea. I'm clenching a wooden tiller as my sailing instructor, twenty-four-year-old Chris Sherrin, prepares to push the boat out toward the narrow channel that doglegs through the yacht-clogged harbor of Key West. Pivots of concern: We have no motor, the sail is hanging like a laundry bag. I have no idea what I'm doing.

"Pull this toward you," says Chris, sensibly avoiding arcane nautical terminology like "port" and "leeward" and "inuit, ye inuit." "I do so with alacrity. Sure enough, the sail tightens into a graceful arc as the boat pivots toward clear water. Dumbly averted, so far.

I've come to get my sea legs

LET'S GET NATURAL. J World offers courses in Key West, Annapolis, San Diego, and Newport, Rhode Island. Two-day introductory courses cost \$245. The best day covers the basics of sailing along the parts of the boat, understanding the wind, and maneuvering through the different points of sail. On day two, students run man-overboard drills, learn to heave to, and practice mooring pickup. By the end of the course, you should feel comfortable sailing a boat under supervision. The second class offers a more comprehensive leveling course for \$295. For schedules and other information, call J World at 800-343-2255.



at J World, the sailing school offshore of the J Boats yacht company since the mid-1980s. J Boats has been building racing machines like the legendary J/24, one of the most successful yacht designs of all time. It's an intensely simple, sparsely, and fast, no compromise boat for the hardcore sailor. The sailing school takes a similarly practical approach: Rather than start weekend students with classroom lectures on theory and terminology, J World throws them, as it were, into the deep end.

On our first breakthrough, twenty-five-foot winds have whipped the Gulf into four-cupped chop. Five more knots, Chris tells us, and the insurance won't cover any mishaps. Mishaps? I can imagine. With the sails tightened and the wind whistling over the bow, the vessel heels over precariously; the deck partly buried in the churning sea. A quick flip of the tiller and the boat yaws to the other side, the boom slams through the air, and ropes whip through ratcheted pulleys. "I saw a guy get his hand pulled into a block once," Chris admonishes. "Pulled his finger clean off."

Chris gives each of us four students a chance to work the tiller while the others take turns manning the sails. Gradually, through all the flying chaos, a sense of order emerges: a feeling for the wind and for the sails, an instinct for the almost living energy that comes up through the tiller. Handled properly, the boat trades its dormousehood for a taut energy, surging and flying through the waves. Six miles an hour feels like twenty.

At the end of the day, wiped but proud, we maneuver in again past the masts of occupying yachts and across for an official debriefing at the Schooner Wharf Bar. Tally salt-soaked clothes—my Scrimped knicker—one Britney—many Fingers—ten.

Add in a cold beer and you've got a successful day of seamanship.

—JAY WALKER

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In other words, the same plastic surgeon who closes a child's cleft palate or rebuilds a woman's breast lost to mastectomy is also trained in cosmetic surgery procedures—such as liposuction, breast enlargement, spinal surgery and facelifts.

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For more information or to find a board-certified ASPRS member in your area, call the American Society of Plastic and Reconstructive Surgeons at 1-800-635-0635, visit our website at <http://www.plasticsurgery.org>, or look for our symbol in yellow page listings and advertising for individual member surgeons.



The symbol designates surgeons who are active members of the American Society of Plastic and Reconstructive Surgeons. They are certified in the specialty of plastic surgery by the American Board of Plastic Surgery and are dedicated to the highest standards of patient safety and surgical excellence.

advertisement

I could have worn baggy T-shirts to the beach.

I could have laughed at the "love handle" jokes.



Photo: Photo by Gary Kasper

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When the Party's Over

YOUR FRIEND IS A PROBLEM drinker, a fallin' down, commo-bugger drinker, off and on the wagon. Fresh from rehab, he's trying to put his life back together. You're having a dinner party, and he's invited. Do you serve the Sauvignon blanc with the meat? Why not? Are you expected to deny yourself and your guests one of life's greatest pleasures in order to accommodate his personal demons? Or, the other hand, you've been coupled with inside acts, on the other, it's none of your business.

Now that mineral waters come in as many flavors as Baskin-Robbins, it may be easier than it once was to avoid social drinking. But it's not any easier to keep the right company when you're trying to keep it in the road.

In my twenties, when I decided to swear off chemicals, legal and otherwise, some of my best friends turned out to be my worst enemies. Until then, Doug had been such a party animal that his friends had called him Doug. But when I stopped my meep, some of my pals went through a worse withdrawal than I did. Some of those who'd been most condemning of my childish antics now grew irritated, resentful to my growing up, and they'd try subtly to seduce me back into my old ways.

It wasn't conscious, and it wasn't personal. I'd taken away their part. I'd been their designated id. And soon enough, without me as the backup buddy as when they could extenuate their primitive impulses, they began having problems with their own inner lust.

Since then, I've spent decades among writers, actors, and journalists, who employ spirits not only as social lubricants but in pump primer to the well of creativity. I know that those closest to you make the crucial difference. Recently, I dashed into a sports bar with a new friend to watch a Knicks game.

"You don't drink, do you?" he noted as I ordered a Coke with my Buffalo wings. "No, not really," I replied.

"Why not?"
"No big deal." I laughed, accustomed to this query. "My friend's a bit of a mess, more than his share of alcoholism," I explained. "Why worry the Fuzzi? It's a vote of no confidence, really, in my ability to resist the darker currents in my gene pool."

"Fish—I don't drink, either," declared my friend, an accomplished actor. "Haven't in years. I used to drink a lot, but once I went onstage drunk I got through the performance okay, but it scared me, so I quit."

"Congratulations," I said, smiling to the big-screen TV.

"Happy beer" has now well washed a few weeks later in their apartment, supping her words and planning significantly at her husband, who'd finally went to the suburbs and looked out the balcony. They issued each other small, carefully as I sat there, shade-jawed.

"If she knows his history, why does she encourage him to drink?" I wondered aloud to a mutual friend.

"She's dependent herself and needs him to be her screwup buddy." Clearly, he'd already read this play from the sidelines. "That way, he's the one with the problem. Not her."

And I already knew he was right. Loved ones don't always have your best interests at heart. They don't always have their own best interests at heart.

If only because it's easier most of us are inclined to give the indulgence of others a wide berth—usually in the hope that they'll reciprocate when it comes to our own treacheries. I've even grilled my burgers to the vegetarian brother-in-law who's not been excluded from the family barbecue. Going along to get along is sustainable until the station gets higher.

So what do you do as a loyal friend—about the newly named taster and his companion? Serve the wine. If you were dining one on one, then I'd say give him a bottle—practice self-restraint. But at a party where guests expect wine, you open yourself to cracks like "What did this become a dry society?" and "Oh, were we supposed to brown-bag?" Ask your pal about it once, point blank. What would you like to drink with dinner?

Whatever you do, keep the issue out of the spotlight and his eyes off the line. There may be no easy place to land between proselytizing and persecuting, but remain, but, in a dinner, not an intervention. A fellow I know once found himself cornered at his own intervention and was so embarrassed by it all that he simply beat up everybody who'd shown up to help him. ■

Spring Forward, Crash Car

DEAN STREIBER REPORTS

May we humbly suggest that you petition Congress, or, better yet, write your congressmen, to make the Monday after the first Sunday in April a national holiday? Call it the Great American Sleep-In.

According to research published in *The New England Journal of Medicine*, the day after we lose an hour of sleep "springing forward" for daylight saving (April 6 this year), motor-vehicle accidents jump by something like 10 percent. The supposed drowsy drivers are to blame, according to the last data that day after we "fall back" on the last Sunday in October, there's a commensurate decrease in such accidents.

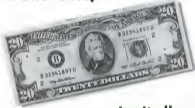
Figure in the losses out in workplace accidents, the limitations of doing through the Monday-morning meeting, and myriad other consequences, and it's a no-brainer: A Sleep-In is the simplest, most efficient, public-health initiative you could possibly dream up.

Of course, you were to take the latest step of shunning standard time entirely in favor of daylight saving. When the UK did just that in the late 1960s for three years, studies estimated that more than a thousand lives a year were saved as the highways alone.

—DEAN STREIBER



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STYLING: JEFFREY MAYER

GENTLEMAN

MILAN'S NEW MIX

Americans and women share the spotlight with the Italian masters
By Woody Hochswender

MILAN HAS RETAKEN center stage in men's fashion. First, there was the reintegration of Gucci, led by American designer Tom Ford, and the stunning rise of Prada, whose black and brown nylon fabrics have swept across gender lines to influence men's wear. (Shoppers were in line to get into the Prada and Gucci boutiques in Milan.) Now there is a new wave of foreign invaders with progressive fashions who are showing their wares in Milan.

In January Richard Tyler, an Australian, based in the United States, took over the design reins of Hylton and showed a hip, youth-oriented collection. [el Sender, a German designer of mostly chic women's clothes, made his men's-wear debut with subtle, featherweight tailored clothing. And Thomas Kraus, a quintessential New Yorker, brought his slim-fitting, black men's clothes to the Milan runway and got an enthusiastic welcome.

These designers add strong points of view to a scene that already has such heavyweights as Giorgio Armani and Gianni Versace as well as marvelous idiosyncratic creators like Romeo Gigli and Ennio Capasa of Costume National. Despite all these diverse talents, there seems to be a consensus emerging that beneath the surface changes in men's fashion, the underlying mood has also changed. He is as likely to be influenced by MTV as by what his father taught him about dressing. His approach emphasizes an attitude of cool over studied classiness.

The new masculine style from Milan, courtesy of clothes from top right: The rich, big look of Gucci—vibrant ties and trousers with interlocking G's. Slim three-button suits with ticket pocket by Giorgio Armani. Armani's striped, rippled cardigan; by Bruce Buggs; and red cable sweater by Richard Tyler for Hylton. All Sender's gray wool men's jackets. Hylton's peaked lapel suit wears with cycling jersey.

PHOTOGRAPHY BY PIERRE COUDRAUX





From left: Black sheering coat by Gianni Versace; Fitted double-breasted short coat by Dolce & Gabbana; over-the-shoulder and quilted vest by Moschino; puffy silk coat by Costume National; short, straight coat by Prada; jumpsuit by Donna Karan.

tion. This season, he's very fond of rich suzettes and velvets, accented with Gucci's double-G logo on ties and on trousers, and of black knit body suits with a hint of transparency like a beautiful image for a man that's also very lovable.

Combining high and low elements—dressed-down pieces with more luxurious clothing—has become a key trend. For *Thelma*, Tyler combined cycling jerseys with gray flannel suits in a winning debut collection. Dolce & Gabbana paired leopard print T-shirts with pinstripe suits.

A new fashion is men's fashion in the short, straight coat. The best seen by Romeo Gigli, who showed them in checked velvet, Prada, which had them in wool of olive-green (the near Prada color), and Versace, who had an array of baggy, daisy chainfolds. The new style can probably be traced to Costume National, which featured such short coats in wool twill with satin lapels or

Porton lamb collars to go with slightly grungy straight trousers with tons of buckle. This is elegance—with a loose edge.

(The younger man's idea of "class" is the sexier, the sexier.) In addition, the body that the clothing depicts has been transformed. Today's man is thinner, gym-

built, body proud, and thus more amenable to a sensuous, close fit. The sack suit no longer applies.

All these things were reflected in the men's-wear collections shown in Europe. The look is very fine, if

not as extreme as the shrink-wrapped suits of recent seasons. Taking Giorgio Armani as a reference point, the suits are molded to the body without being constrictive, shoulders are modest and slightly padded.

At Gucci, designer Tom Ford has loosened up his *swank* and sexy men's tailoring. Trousers are fuller, with a flare at the bottom, and jacket shoulders wider, to balance the new proper

Come Fly with Me

FASHION FORWARD, IN CASE ANYONE HEARD IT, OF THE CELEBRITY OF a collective movement in the fashion world: the sudden new grace of fly-front suit jackets and coat pockets. They curved up at, from left, Gianfranco Ferré, Gucci, Al Sander, and Giorgio Armani, among others. Where did they come from? Will anyone wear them? Postquestion first: They appear to be a transmutation of a current rage for the classic field coat, which has a concealed pocket as in front. Designers seem to like the utilitarian, aviator look. As for the second question: It's not for everyone, surely, but Tom Ford, of Gucci, was spotted in a double-breasted model recently—a man with the average office inclination.



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raincoat by London Fog; wind
crossover by G-Star; wind
raincoat by House of Mar. 1



Storm Watch

Gabriel Byrne takes cover in the new high-tech rainwear. Photographs by Stephen Danelian. Produced by John Mather.



Key treated-canvas raincoat by Pat Miller. Opposite: Black nylon raincoat by Ellegi; fitted wool-pole sweater and wool trousers by Joseph Abboud; lace-up leather shoes by French Connection.

time of the piece's creation, the editor-in-chief, in a language as Miller's. Crumrine, Garfield's editor, responded to the note with the more benign tag: "He spent an astonishing portion of the time putting the highest possible man, even quite a manager to give on the paper and in all right mind."

Nevertheless, the book is not perfect in its execution. The author's style is somewhat over-the-top, and the book is a little too long. The author's style is somewhat over-the-top, and the book is a little too long. The author's style is somewhat over-the-top, and the book is a little too long.

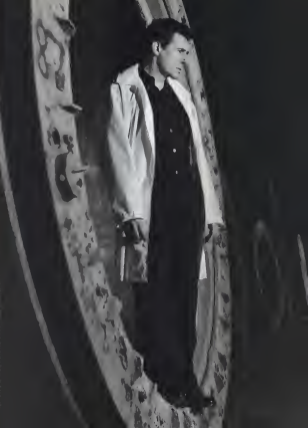
—JERRY A. COOPER



Hydra also jacket by Gervais
1961, vestier shirt by Dora
Kassie, tulle top by Givra,
Separate Whiteplus short
ribbed and wool trousers by
Givra gilet by Dora, lace-
lined cashmere sweater by
Dora, black lace up leather
shoes by Dora. For more
information see page 122.



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Foot Prints

The trends in spring shoes include elegant square-toed loafers and lace-ups, sandals with substance, and the good old desert boot.

Photographs by Giovanni Gastel

Produced by Giulietta Zamboni



For spring, David's models don't take on the famous knee-bite shoes. A nice moral for cuts across the map of a new suede loafer. Apparently, soft suede desert boots, like the classic but with a thickened, more durable sole, by CE Rubinelli Shoes.



Slippery slip-on oxford
sandal with ridged
outsole sole for outdoor
use, by B&B Oppenheimer
The new square-toed
dress shoe, dress and
loose, in dark-chocolate
leather by J. Ferrand.
For more information
see page 122.



Bebe and the Boys

Dance was a major inspiration for Giorgio Armani's spring collection. Here, Bebe Neuwirth and members of the Broadway hit Chicago demonstrate the liquid grace of Armani in motion. Photographs by Dah Len. Produced by John Mather.

All clothing by Giorgio Armani and Emporio Armani. For store information see page 122.

ARMANI IS STYLING IN KENDALL KALE FOR DRESSER • DRESSER, NEW YORK, CLOTHING
BLAZER BY BEBE NEUWIRTH • CHICAGO BULLS DANCERS • CHICAGO BULLS DANCERS
BLAZER BY BEBE NEUWIRTH • CHICAGO BULLS DANCERS • CHICAGO BULLS DANCERS

remains, including. The rally, which drew a massive crowd, saw the average death toll in Iraq about 100,000, the subject, going to be ignored the marchers. See here's the latest, nation, and the two has justice system September a broad counseling and a woman bleeding for a. Public awareness had country go state blamed work suffer- its suicide. It was changed further bond prosecutor of that she's the charges "I never said of us."

starting after- day an in-ness based ar- array of laws nation is re-

one would relief. The teenagers and everyone had it not have done.

sorts. "They at least. "I," he says, "For me, it's potent each at the cases, 100,000 just accurate comes if he who have a higher in ill map."

[continued from page 136] laptop, but all the plugs were full. Since this is a house, no matter how big, it will soon have to spring for a major surge protector.

Immediately there was a call. Alcho had forgotten my check-in list. And there the wait, bowing low as any doc with stationary duty and my name and that I was "in residence." I bowed right back and tried to get a bit lower.

Instantly, the phone rang again. [Don't these gals give you any time for personal ablutions?] It was Korina, my own personal attack. Now, this attack had been one of my most delicate in my times. Having read about the attack who would be assigned to care for my every need, I was in full dread. How could I say that I did not want a stringent accompanying my needs, attached to me, accompanying my preferences for future steps? I had seemed concerned to avoid such contact and scrutiny. It was said the attack could perform 143 services.

Korina asked if I had any questions and whether I was going to be using my couch. For a second, I was stunned—I couldn't be sure. At 3:00 AM, I just might want to go over and put my head on the mattress. I thought, too about whether to order "clothes on spec"—one of the board attendants. I thought of poor Korina, late on a Friday afternoon, calling over to Venice.

After a while the hotel-room lush made me very sleepy and hazy. Nothing is more soporific and drowsy than a hotel room in one's own city. The THF was doing the job of a last, very hotel room to meet all physical needs without complication. However, even though I didn't want my dank, greasy, the narrow ceiling and heavy, hazy, the narrow ceiling, the door I once had at the Trump. My Mahal, the high roller bowls of World-class MGM—all the perks of cramped Trumpland, when every bath in a Jacuzzi and all that glitters is at least gold leaf, or almost. All I had here were the four chocolates and three bottles of pedicured vegetables, which probably were not more except at a price, and a low-lying assembled, painfully tempting collection of booze.

In haste, I always look for something just west. I'm instantly hooked. I might just need. My eye lagged on the four chocolates, perfect for urban voyeurism, but it was not obvious. There had to be a Trump elevator checker following the bathrobe checker

immediately into the vacant room.

Afternoon fell into evening—the dual streams of working headlines and soft lights stroking through the trees below, the kitchen of the no-longer-Trump ice tank, the no longer-Trump Plaza, the bare, dark black of waste park, and all of it usefully for my silent, cut only by the occasional far-away siren and well-muffled crime siren. I was impressed by the very Manhattan of the room, for it is the spiritual one of the room, accessible to the light and assorted otherworldly disciplines—her ESQ a march for his IQ. I thought of Trump's scarcely masked fury when she right, from the great distance of the stage and advancing years. From her room, she saw for Mr. B. But that was long ago.

I was tempted to stay in my bathroom, so busy in the rest of the room. I wandered out and tried to find another attack gone. I saw a man wheeling into the elevator, a scared boy heavily strapped together with Mylar tape. Then my gentleman caller arrived.

I had told him he could not come up because the rooms would think he was staying (another shilling hotel story). I made him take his escort when we were down for dinner, just as they would know he was not. As "no reason," I had forgotten to pack a dress and to wear my nightgown. ("You're not going to wear that?" and my offer, which guaranteed that I would) and carried my Delta to flight for an evening bag. We walked through the tiny lobby of seven heavily stained, chipped, fluorescent, are in my night, with my gentleman caller holding his coat like a shield for the mandatory pass. "What kind of wedding is this?" I asked him, smiling the words. "Floral," he said.

We met Susan Margen, the press agent who had been hired to do the PR on my last book and who (I had always suspected) considered me peculiar. Night, I would wake up with chest pains, thinking Susan Margen might possess the state of my last TV appearance on a Connecticut cable station. It had unbearable vision of her playing it at the "holier" to cheer up mourning authors. Now, added, she had found me smoking around a New York hotel in my nightgown, carrying suspicious plain glass, and had sent me my personal, but it was not obvious. There had to be a Trump elevator checker following the bathrobe checker

There was no place to hide in New York.

At the elevator, we were through a bit of a charade for the seven young men, but, having repaired with my Connecticut address, it was almost, almost STIFFS, which took me to the floor. My computer equipment had not fooled them. Two glasses on the bedside table, two boxes of Buns, though only one European-style linen floorcloth had been left.

"Two coffees?" room service asked the next morning as I ordered my twenty-dollar coffee and half grapefruit. Hanging from the door were two little Trump cracker sacks, one with my polished shoes, the other with the Times.

As you see, my mother called and I did not have to ask how she had found me. After I had returned my interest in the telescope—which showed only opaque lenses and jugs, the desecrated planes of moon from the New York Athletic Club, the great city wailing up Broadway and slowly—and since there was nothing else to do, I snuck down to the concourse level, where a whole unfinished space awaited. On my Father's Corner, he said. "The quality of fresh is concrete—no other head facility comes close." The first was an finished as I wandered through the darkened rooms, with their eerie hanging light fixtures and half-stone-of-the-art pieces. I felt that thrill, the holy privacy of the dark burglar, as I lurched the hall, looking for the nearest Trump workshop clothing that might be purchased (as purchased) at the center. I expected the crack Trump security force to spring upon me at any moment. And I had an almost uncomfortable urge to try the waiting, shimmering light pool. I imagined that when I surfaced, the blacked, already-disappearing, massive would be there, holding out my complimentary towel, ready to greet me. Or I might get locked in the steam room. What a death—nasty, soaked Prepers, excess flesh shredding, the linguistic Trump and the dewy Marla at the services proceeding to care.

I carried my own bag down. The Johnny Cash was at the desk looked up with that particular Cheeky Time, Coney Carney bag slippers. I had a feeling that I was the hotel's only guest. My mother made me realize that I was I had to go, go, go, like 1979, I knew that someone out there, Tom Baker was leaving the light on for me in

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A NIGHT IN TRUMP'S BED

YES, ONE COULD SAY WE HAD a history: Donald Trump and I—a history that ended with my saying I was sorry for him and his saying he was sorry for me (he always has to say) and calling me “creaky” a week I hadn’t heard since I used to beat up my brothers. That exchange was long ago, and I forgot him.

It was with an undeterred heart that I checked into the Trump International Hotel & Tower, which had changed its name from Trump International Tower to avoid being called the TIT.

The hotel wasn’t exactly finished; a kind of lack-of-a-back and was ended with deep, round excavation pits, but it was open for business.

The only times I had been in New York hotels were for my wedding nights, but within the last eight months I had stayed at the Four Seasons in Milan, Round Hill in Jamaica, the Villa Medici in Florence, and in California at the Hotel del Coronado, the Waterfront Hilton, the Beverly Hills Hotel, the Mandarin Inn, the Apple Farm, the Monterey Plaza, the San Francisco Ritz-Carlton, and the Stanford Inn by the Sea—resulting in a certain expertise and an outstanding collection of interesting bath products.

Knowing how strongly offended Donald was by people (cf. his early comments on Miss Universe) portending before someone air him west), I had gone on the Hager’s Famous Nine Pounds in Nine Days diet and was about halfway through when, at six, I was thin enough to check into “the most important new address in the world” (according to Trump’s ad). The very place where Gail’s Western cunts had once screeched and beat their underlings, a building famous for ovulating, breeding, and accom-

panying in the wind (somewhat like Marla in her exercise video) but now rebuked by Philip Johnson and Bing Shu-sweep-toned for the harmony of the spheres by “the world’s most visionary developer” (and I). Trump had rid it of its bad karma and its redundant energy patterns and restored calm for future Asian visitors.

I walked under the matched lights and gold, into the shade. Spans of paranoia swept me as I approached the awning, black-clad staff at the desk with my suspiciously small, eagle bag (which I had voided of all evidence of my affiliation to ensure only normal bowing and scraping). The lobby hotel with a kind of eternally shiny hyper-morose wood was at once small and trying to overwhelm. It did not encourage.



The hotel room. A major moment of the Trump International Hotel & Tower.

panying, or even begging. The hotel was remarkably smooth, calm, and in Trumpian terms, kind of new age, with its Asian Every-designed sensuous and many mirrors in all black crapping around on rubber sleds like the attendants in a metropolis.

I had chosen a low-end room, which meant my (spelt) with sex), and Alaska checked me in.

“Did you have a long trip?” the bellman asked, and I said no, but in some ways I had come very, very far. It had cost me psychically to forgive and to come to this small blond room on the eleventh floor, facing Central Park.

The size of the whole endeavor must have offended Trump, who, unlike E.F. Schumacher and Richard Brauer, does not believe small is beautiful. To him, no women and buildings only Major is beautiful.

I knew my real me with Trump was that I undetected him too well—he kind of horrible loneliness, his night without sleep, the void that only more build-up could fill. (His legs here was a 2’ ring up against the globe.) He had given me parts of his new book to read before lawyers and other hands had touched it. I knew his habits (Tea. Two cranberry juice, no alcohol), and I never doubted his heart.

“Does the window open?” I asked the bellman, for had I not this adventure would have come to a rapid halt, my claustrophobia colliding with my burned-alive-in-hotel-room phobia.

How can I describe the very beginning of the hope of my room? Beige carpet, walls, curtains, ceiling, chair, cabinet, air vents, bedposts, lampshade over, faucet, sink, Kleenex dispenser, wastebasket, re-level only by mopping ripples in the wood grain, perky beige curtains sunk in the vision, crinkled on the sheets. It was, as some designers must have said, “about right.”

A small brass teacup faced Central Park. There were three deliberately broken roses, a comb of chocolates, and a welcoming note from the manager. Above the desk were two framed prints of ancient warriors with staves of leafless trees on pedestals. I bent to plug in my [continued on page 134]



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